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Lindsey Wiebe

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Movin' on up:

Thirty per cent tuition increase recommended by committee

by Suzanne Beaubien

UVic's finance committee has recommended that tuition be raised 30 per cent in the 2003-2004 school year.

Based on the committee's draft budget framework, students can expect to pay around $1,800 per semester come next September, with even higher fees for law and MBA students.

"No one likes raising tuition fees," said Jamie Cassels, vice president academic and provost. "But we've been cutting for years."

Last spring, the university received a letter from the government outlining the next three years of grant allocations. While the grant money is contingent on UVic increasing its number of full-time equivalent students (FTEs), the amount of funding will remain the same from year to year for the next three.

UVic has limited options when it comes to finding resources, said Jack Falk, vice president of finance and operations. To increase the university's budget by one per cent, tuition fees have to be raised 4.5 per cent, he said.

Salaries and benefits make up 80 per cent of UVic's expenses, said Cassels, making it difficult to cut back on spending. Cutbacks in the 90s saw 30 faculty laid off to cope with rising costs and the NDP government-imposed tuition freeze, said Cassels. At the same time, said Falk, the number of students at UVic increased.

But student leaders think the university should be working harder to find funding elsewhere.

At a presentation to the board of governors on Nov. 18, Troy Sebastian, former UVSS chair, said the students' society wants to see UVic committed to reducing tuition hikes in relation to future grants from the government.

"We would like to work more with the university to increase grants," said Sebastian, suggesting the university and the UVSS co-sign a letter to the government, requesting more funding.

Sebastian said increasing tuition fees also undermines the university's 2002 strategic plan, by making post-secondary education less accessible to First Nations students.

"These bands are only capable of sending so many people to university. By increasing tuition, there will be fewer and fewer First Nations students graduating every year," he said.

Differential tuition fees will also likely be written into the budget framework as proposals from both the law faculty and the masters of business and administraton program requested fees be raised to meet costs of improving programs. Cassels said students studying law at UVic can expect to pay a thousand dollars more every year, on top of the base 30 per cent increase.

"It costs twice as much to educate a law student versus a humanities student," said Cassels.

"Isn't it fair to ask them to contribute a higher fee for their education? If everyone pays the same amount, they're subsidizing the law students."

The $1,000 increase for 2003-2004 is just the first in the three-year plan the university has for law students. By 2005, they can expect to pay around $7,000 in tuition fees, an amount that Cassels said is still the lowest in Canada.

The students' society does not support differential tuition fee increases because they reduce accessibility to professional programs, said Sebastian.

But Cassels said 30 per cent of every dollar in differential tuition fees will go towards financial aid for students in that program.

Also in the committee's recommendations to the board is the elimination of all subsidization for international students over the next three years. Until now, international students have received some subsidization from the provincial government.

Citing UVic's 81 per cent minimum GPA requirement, Cassels said the move would mean more spots available for domestic students. There are currently about 500 international students at UVic. In three years time, they will all be paying around $14,000 a year. This will be a significant amount of revenue for UVic, said Cassels.

Cassels admits the budget amendment is controversial.

"There is a strong social desire to increase international students, but it's hard to defend to the taxpayer when their kid doesn't get into university," he said.

The 30 per cent increase is broken down into two figures: 25 per cent is slated to meet UVic's current budget requirements, while the other five per cent covers discretionary fees that will go towards making improvements at UVic, mostly in terms of "e-strategies," computer-related systems and technology such as e-learning and student services, said Cassels.

But UVSS Director of Finance Jonas Gifford said he does not support tuition increases that pay for enhancing services.

"Now is not the time to enhance services," said Gifford. "The government has to play a role; if they don't, neither will students."

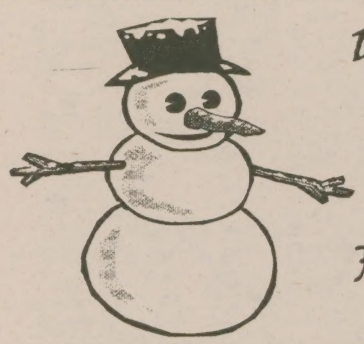
Cassels said 30 per cent increases are not a trend that will continue at UVic in years to come.

"I'm hopeful that when the economy turns around the government will start investing more in post-secondary education. Politicians are getting it. We're on the radar, but we won't see it in a year or two."

The board will meet again on Dec. 16 to review the appended framework, which will be ratified at the Jan. 6 board of governors meeting.

photo by Jennifer Bowles

Cha-ching! Students will likely have to pay 30 per cent more for their educations, in six months time.



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Doctors in, woodpeckers out:

Building construction in Cunningham Woods will continue

by John Thompson

The university will go ahead with plans to build the new Island Medical Building inside the Cunningham Woods area.

Currently, woodpeckers inhabit balsam, second-growth Douglas fir, and arbutus that stand as the last wooded area inside Ring Road. Efforts to preserve the area culminated when students and faculty linked arms around the building's proposed location early in November, during the "Ring around the Woods" protest.

This prompted the Campus Development Committee (CDC) to recommend on Nov. 1 that the building's location be reconsidered. Jack Falk, UVic's vice president of finance and operations, was charged with reviewing the costs of moving the building site.

On Friday, Nov. 22, at a special meeting of the CDC, Falk presented his findings: The building should go in the ground where originally planned.

"In the end, the CDC's original decision was right," Falk said.

To date, $330,000 has been spent on the building's design, which began last April when the site was chosen among three others. In September, the design was approved.

The reason for the building's location in the wooded area is "primarily because of academic linkage," Falk said. The medical building will be in close proximity to both the biology and engineering buildings.

At this point, changing the location would involve selecting a new site and altering the building's design. In addition, the university is committed to having the building complete by 2004 and to paying for all cost overruns.

"Our timelines are already tight for developing the site by 2004," Falk said.

The next step will be to finish the working drawings, expected to be complete by March. The tendering process will then begin, with construction probably beginning next fall.

Falk remains defensive of criticism, particularly a group letter printed in *the Martlet* on Nov. 28 ("Admin dishonest about campus plan, group says") written by students and faculty. The letter called for an external body to oversee campus planning, distinct from the university administration.

"[The letter] makes it clear no quantity of consultation and meaningful dialogue is their intent. Their intent is controlling the planning," Falk said.

Sarah Webb, a student representative on the CDC, said past news stories involving Cunningham Woods have been unnecessarily divisive, portraying it as a struggle between students and university administration.

She said the decision to continue developing the woods was disappointing, and that faculty and students alike lobbied to have the building's location changed.

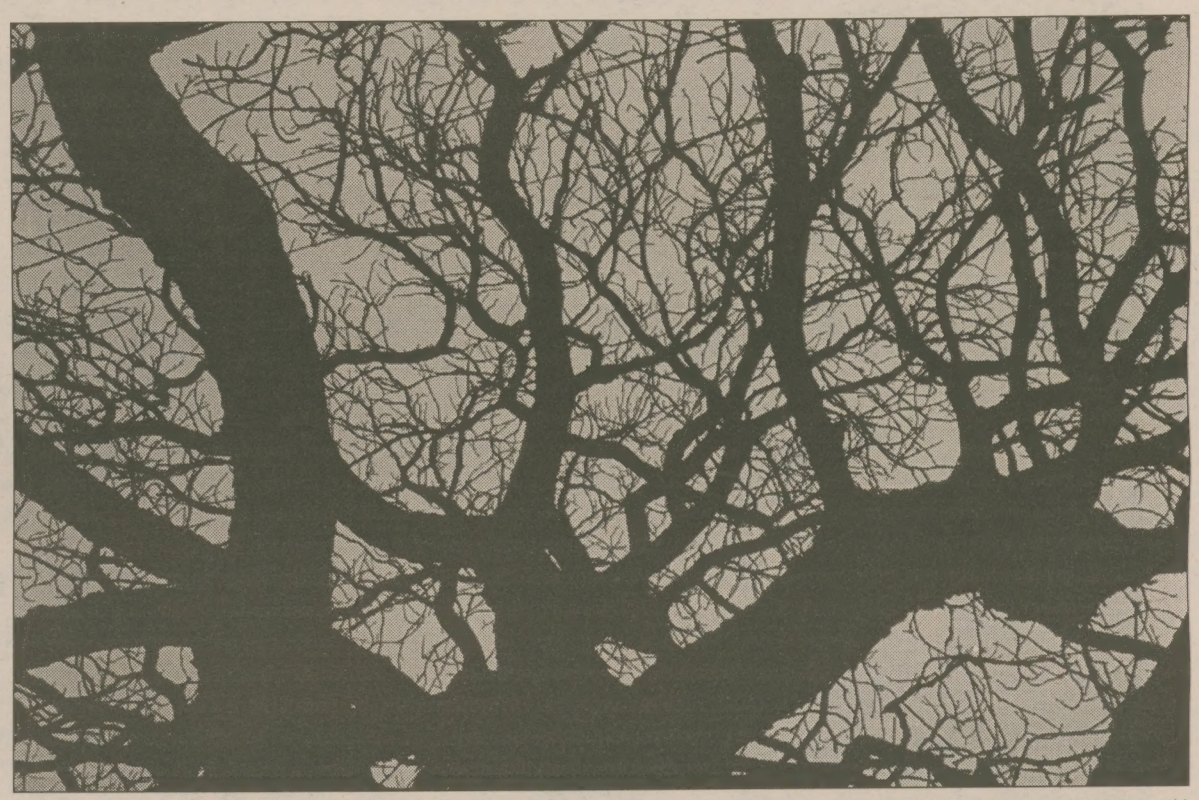

photo by Alison McDonald

Gnarled silloutes of trees inside Cunningham woods snake against the evening sky.

"This goes beyond all this. It affects neighbours, faculty and students," she said.

Webb remains optimistic that other portions of the woods can be preserved.

At present, there are two other potential building sites located inside the wooded area, and on Monday, Dec. 3, the provincial government announced funding for a new engineering building. One of the potential locations for the 7,800-square-meter building, which will house an additional 141 students by 2006, is adjacent to the existing engineering building, inside another section of the woods. (For full story, see below.)

"It would appear to me, logically, one of the building sites we consider is adjacent to the engineering building," Falk said, adding he expects recommendations for the site location will be made by the project requirements committee early next year.

Webb hopes to prevent further development in the woods.

"We've seen the response from the campus community, and we've seen the woods are very important," she said.

Webb added that allowing the different faculties to mingle on campus could be a good thing.

"To me," she added, "the further segregation of campus doesn't do anything."

New engineering building scheduled for 2005

by Suzanne Beaubien

Engineers will have ready access to even more computer labs and classroom space as a government grant gives UVic incentive to build another new engineering building in the next few years.

As part of the Liberal government's four-year "Double the Opportunity" (DTO) initiative, the $22-million grant is contingent on UVic increasing the capacity of its engineering department, by creating 118 undergraduate and 23 graduate full-time equivalent spaces. This year is the second that the provincial government has specially funded engineering and computer science programs. Last year, UVic received $3-million in DTO funds.

Though the government grant will pay for the cost of building the new facility, Jamie Cassels, vice president academic and provost, said for every dollar spent on building it, 35 cents needs to be spent on its upkeep.

To combat these indirect costs, UVic President David Turpin recently made a trip to Ottawa to lobby the federal government for a grant that will go towards funding the indirect costs of research.

Though the funding has not yet been committed, Cassels is hopeful and has included the figures in the draft budget framework for the 2003-2004 school year.

The proposed 7,800-square metre building is scheduled to open in the fall of 2005. The building will contain classrooms, labs and offices as well as student study space. The building's location has yet to be determined.

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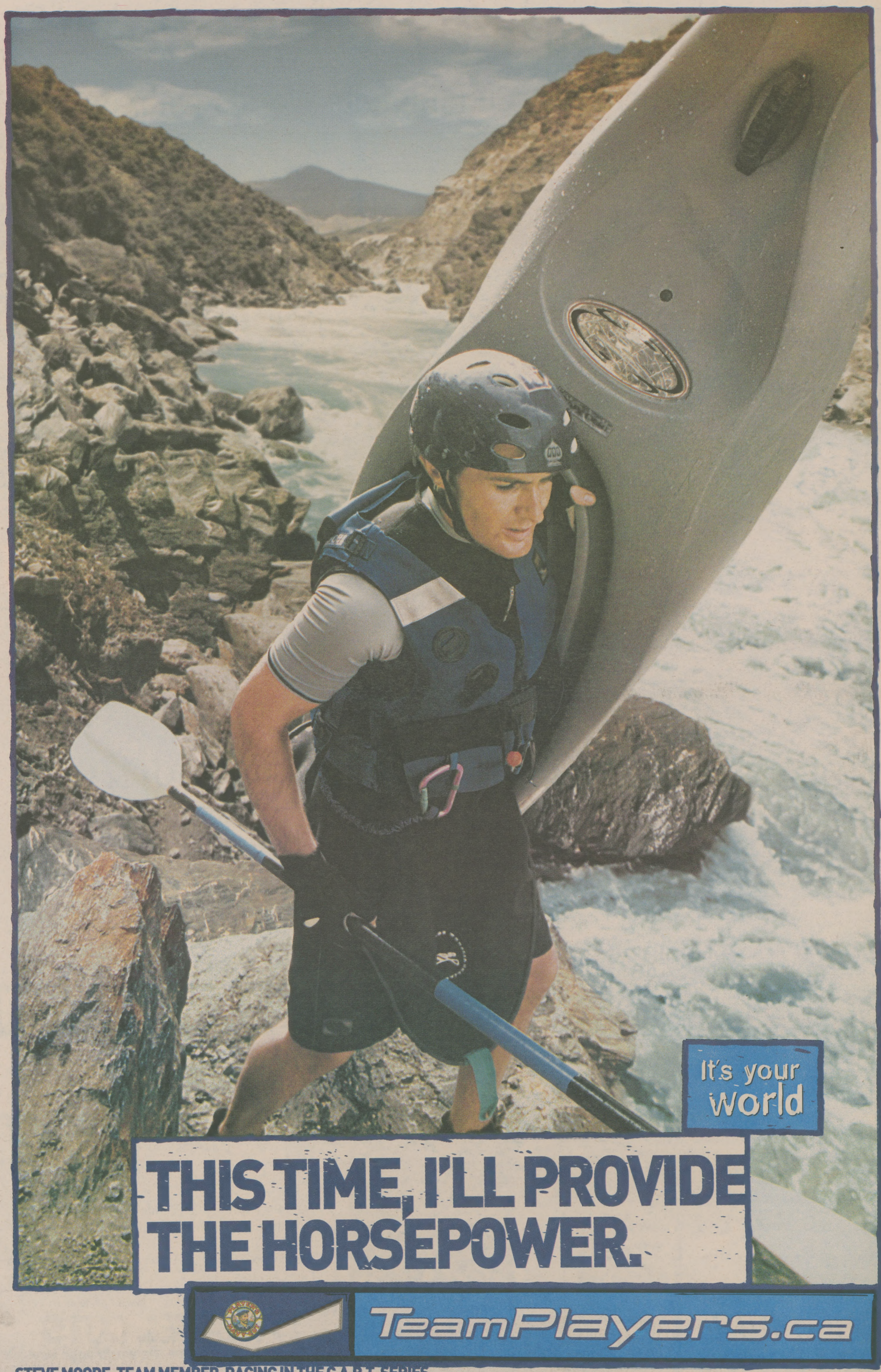


STEVE MOORE, TEAM MEMBER, RACING IN THE C.A.R.T. SERIES.

Triple what? Constituency groups prepare to cough up more cash

by Robin Platts
illustration by Jeffrey Weston

Advocacy groups will soon have to pay usage fees for the space they occupy in the SUB, according to a new policy to be approved this week by the students' society board of directors.

Starting May 2003, UVSS advocacy groups UVic Pride, the Women's Centre, the Students of Colour Collective (SCC) and the Society for Students With a Disability (SSD) will begin paying triple net fees, which cover lighting and heating expenses and other building costs.

The process of developing the policy began in May, when the UVSS board gave notice they were terminating their existing space agreements with Pride and the Women's Centre.

"The UVSS didn't expect it to be a big deal," said Erin Kelly, the Women's Centre rep to the board, "and then it was." The two groups were surprised by the move, and said the UVSS hadn't given them adequate warning.

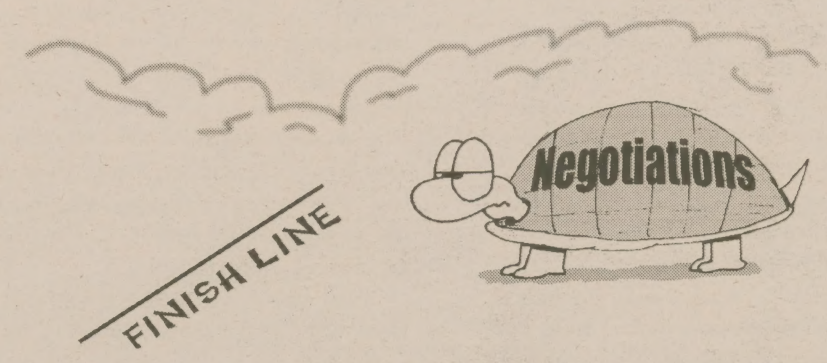
The UVSS formed a subcommittee to negotiate a space usage policy – not only for Pride and the Women's Centre, but also for the other two constituency groups, the SSD and SCC, as well as the Native Students' Union (NSU). The aim was to agree upon a consistent policy for all the groups.

As negotiations began, the two sides agreed on most issues, but there was one sticking point: Triple net, which the advocacy groups did not previously pay.

It became clear that the introduction of triple net was one of the UVSS board's intentions in negotiating new space agreements/policies.

Negotiations went on for three months, moving forward with the velocity of a sedated tortoise. But triple net remained the one issue that the parties could not agree upon. Pride rejected the idea altogether, while the Women's Centre grudgingly agreed to the board's final proposal – that the groups would pay just two-thirds of triple net costs for their respective spaces, starting in May 2003, and that the fees would be paid annually to better accommodate the groups' needs.

"We came to an agreement – as close as we could get," said Women's Centre Coordinator Eliza Walter, "and we're going to have to start paying in May. I don't know how it's going to affect us yet."



The hardest hit by the change will be the Women's Centre, which occupies the largest space of the four groups.

Based on the current rate, the Women's Centre will pay $1,975 per year in triple net fees, Pride will pay $661, the SSD $657 and the NSU $986. The SCC, which occupies the smallest space of the groups, will pay $419. (Due to inflation, the rate will increase slightly on May 1, 2003.)

According to former Pride rep Ryan Barry, the university charges the UVSS $240,000 annually for triple-net fees, an amount that is roughly half of the actual cost incurred by the university for providing these services.

Barry said this payment ratio is based on the idea that the SUB is half business space, half space for students.

Dan Kerr, Prides's publicity coordinator, agrees.

"My understanding is that the UVSS pays for the percentage of the square footage that is revenue-generating and the university pays for student space," said Kerr. "In effect, if the constituency groups pay triple net, we're subsidizing UVSS businesses."

"The university pays a portion of certain building operation costs," said UVSS Director of Finance Jonas Gifford.

But, Gifford explained, there are some operating expenses – such as water, sewage and garbage costs – that the university contributes nothing toward.

Gifford said the spaces that the university subsidizes are open to speculation.

"Those numbers are based on a rough estimate of what is free use space and what is allocated for the UVSS," Gifford said.

"You can calculate that any way you want. For example, what you consider an open space is subjective when you get to Pride. Pride has a lock on the door and only people from Pride can get in there."

"If all businesses in the SUB paid triple net at the current rate, it wouldn't generate enough revenue to recover building operating costs," Gifford added.

The emotions that ran high in the summer appear to have been tempered by the lengthy negotiation process.

"We were sick and tired of it," said Walter. "Neither side was going to budge. I agreed to (the new policy), because we were at a standstill. But we were not particularly happy and still had some major concerns."

Pride is also not entirely happy with the agreement but, said Kerr, "we'll comply with the policy."

"Really, in the big picture, we are all on the same team," Kerr said. "They're in a position of financial difficulty and we want to help them out."

The new policy will be approved at this week's UVSS board meeting.

With files from John Thompson

photo by Leigh Phillips

Victoria's seniors take to the leg lawn Tuesday, Nov. 26 to protest provincial cuts to social programs and health care.

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International Solidarity Movement tries to bring peace to conflict

by Norman Ed Baskerville

Israeli Neta Golan and Palestinian George Rishmawi of the International Solidarity Movement (ISM) refuse to be enemies.

Or, at least that's what it said on a sign behind them at the David Strong Auditorium during a conference on Nov. 28 and 29. As part of their North American tour, Golan and Rishmawi spoke to capacity audiences about ISM's non-violent perspective on resisting the Israeli occupation of Palestine.

"The practice of using snipers to shoot at unarmed demonstrators and the acceptance by the Israeli and international community of this systematic murder made it clear for the need to have Israelis and internationals join Palestinians in their marches for freedom," said Golan, a 31-year-old woman from Tel Aviv.

Comprised of an estimated 2,000 international members and thousands of Palestinians, the ISM invites the international community to Palestine to bear witness to the Israeli military's violence towards Palestinian civilians.

Because the Israeli government wishes to avoid political incident by wounding or killing foreigners, ISM internationals act as human shields for Palestinians engaged in unarmed protests. Prior to their arrival in Palestine, international volunteers are told to stay in constant contact with their country's consulate and are briefed on Israeli and international laws applicable to foreigners. Most importantly, ISM internationals are trained on how to interact peacefully with Israeli soldiers and how to get past checkpoints.

Kevin Neish of Victoria visited the volatile West Bank last April during Israel's re-invasion. Neish said the ISM's non-violent resistance was met by Israeli tanks, helicopter gun-ships and hundreds of soldiers.

"I was shot at directly three times," said Neish, who was presented an award for his ISM participation.

During the ISM peace march last April, Israeli soldiers shot and wounded seven internationals and one Palestinian, who were holding signs that read "No violence."

Golan said the ISM has participated in hundreds of non-violent direct actions, such as peaceful protests at checkpoints and at security fence constructions, and the removal of roadblocks placed at the entrances and exits between Palestinian villages. These blockades prevent normal economic trade between communities and stop ambulances from entering and exiting villages without hospitals.

ISM internationals also bring food and water supplies to those in Palestinian villages such as Nablus, a town that has been restricted by a 24-hour curfew for the last six months. Curfew is announced and re-instated by machine gun fire.

"A curfew in Palestine is really house arrest," said Golan.

Rishmawi, who is also the coordinator for the Palestinian Centre for Rapprochement between People, said the international media has stereotyped Palestinians as a violent people.

"I believe in non-violence as a way of resistance," said Rishmawi. "Non-violence is not a strange body to Palestinian and Arab culture, because the value of forgiveness is very high in the culture."

Reports of the occupation and the civilian deaths of Palestinians are rarely reported in Israel, said Golan, who didn't even know about the occupation until she was 15 years old.

"The invisible Palestinian occupation, the sniper killings, the legalized torture and the destroying of civilian homes, is [information] not easily accessible to Israelis, so when suicide bombings happen, Israelis see themselves as victims to Palestinian aggression," said Golan.

Golan added it is important for internationalists and Israelis to join in non-violent resistance in order to force media coverage. During a peace protest an Israeli soldier broke Golan's arm, and because she was Israeli, it garnered national media attention.

"I can't think of a less newsworthy story than a Palestinian with a broken arm," said Golan.

Rishmawi helped found the ISM in the summer of 2001 after a Palestinian/Israeli/International 350-person peace march protested its way successfully into an Israeli military base.

Rishmawi said it was the first time Palestinians had ever entered and exited a military base without being arrested or shot at. The importance of an international presence to the success of non-violent resistance became evident.

"It is important for Palestinians to have hope. The suicide bombers are often youth who witness oppression and the humiliation of their elders and can't see that [their] life will become one worth living," said Rishmawi.

Both the Geneva Convention and UN resolutions recognize the Palestinian right to resist Israeli violence and occupation by armed struggle, said Rishmawi.

However, he believes principles of non-violent resistance can be a powerful weapon in fighting oppression.

There is a western view that sees Palestinian action as terrorism and Israeli military action as defensive, Golan said.

"Terrorism and state terrorism are two sides of the same coin. One cannot exist without the other," said Rishmawi.

U of M denied access to pound animals for experiments

by Kelly Marcella

LONDON (CUP) — Public outcry in Winnipeg has led to a halt in the practice of selling dogs from the pound to the University of Manitoba for research.

Winnipeg's city council decided the sale of pound dogs will cease after Dec. 17, said Tim Dack, chief operating officer of Winnipeg's animal services.

"Supplying dogs from municipal pounds to universities is becoming a socially unacceptable practice," Dack said, noting council's decision was the result of public discontent with the practice.

"[The issue] came up the last time about three or four years ago. This time [the outcry] was the loudest."

"The city pound dogs are only used for acute research. Dogs that would have been put down were sent to the University of Manitoba, anaesthetized, used in research and then euthanized," said John Danakas, director of public affairs for the university, adding the practice has been in place since the 1950s.

"Our position now is that, if the new policy results in less dogs being put down, we're in favour of that. If not, they might have to revisit the decision," Danakas explained.

Danakas said the number of pound dogs used in research has been decreasing over a number of years and they have not made any decision as to what changes will be made with regards to animal research.

"[The decision] could make some research more expensive, but they should be able to continue," Danakas said.

According to Geraldine Kent, director of the University of Western Ontario's Animal Care and Veterinary Services, there are 11 research facilities in London that use animals.

Kent said these facilities predominantly use mice, which are obtained from large companies in the United States and Canada that breed animals specifically for research purposes.

"The animals used in research are of very high quality," Kent said, noting the system for acquiring animals is tightly regulated by the government.

The companies that breed animals must be highly controlled so animals are disease-free in order to ensure accurate results, she said.

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Activist awaits Quebec City court date

by John Thompson

The clouds of tear-gas that drifted through Quebec City during the Summit of the Americas have receded into hazy memory for many, but not Morgan Stewart. He still has a trial to face – and serious criminal charges.

Stewart, 24, is a prominent Victoria activist, NDP member, and former chair of the UVic Student Society. In April 2001, he drove across the country with other Victorians to protest against the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA). But unlike most who participated, Stewart returned to Quebec this week to stand in court for his preliminary hearing on Monday, Dec. 3.

He is charged with uttering threats to a member of the provincial police – a criminal offence with a two-year jail term, and something Stewart swears he never did.

"Obviously the police are mistaken, or confused, or downright lying," Stewart said from his cell-phone on Tuesday.

During the protests, Stewart was chanting through a megaphone when police grabbed him from behind and dragged him into a white van. They allege he was threatening the police.

Stewart maintains the only thing he chanted was: "Sol-sol-solidarity."

When the judge heard Stewart went limp as police grabbed him, he added another charge: resisting arrest.

Stewart said he didn't know he was arrested until he got to the police station. From there, he was moved to prison and held there for three days.

At the hearing, the judge found there was enough evidence to warrant a criminal trial, which Stewart expects sometime in February or March.

The next challenge he faces is raising enough money to transport witnesses – who, like him, live in Victoria – across the country for the trial.

Stewart has a long history of political involvement, and protest. As a child, he remembers tearing NDP signs from his lawn and rallying in front of the post office. At age 12, he joined protests against the Gulf War, and joined the NDP around the same time.

"I was always political, in terms of my perspective of what's going on around me," he said. What makes the fallout from Quebec City different from past experience in civil disobedience, he said, is that "the consequences of the action had no bearing on the reality."

"It just sketches me out to hear that legitimate political protest can be criminalized to this extent."

photo by Jeffrey Weston

Students and faculty gather beneath a light drizzle on Wednesday, Dec. 4, to commemorate the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. Speakers made connections between ongoing violence against women and the murder of 14 women by Marc Lepine inside École Polytechnique in Montréal on December 6, 1989.

University of Calgary tries to cut $50M from budget

by Chris Boutet

EDMONTON (CUP) — The University of Calgary will try to cut its annual spending by $50 million dollars over the next four years.

The cuts come largely as a result of increasing salaries, skyrocketing enrolment, resource costs, and a decrease in provincial funding. Although the details have not yet been hammered out, the school's Director of Communications Andrew Wark said administration is doing their best to maintain quality of education in the face of the deficit.

The $50 million in cuts – which includes a $37 million cut for the 2003/2004 school year alone – were declared last week as part of a four-year plan designed to bring the university's costs back in line with its revenue. The University of Calgary also plans to increase entry requirements, put a cap on undergraduate enrolment and hiring of faculty, and is looking into implementing differential fees. Currently, the school's operating budget is about $600 million.

To determine where the cuts will happen, the university has struck two committees, the Budget Action Group and the Revenue Generation Group, to determine which departments will see growth at the expense of others.

According to Wark, the university has already identified four areas of research it would like to see grow: energy and the environment, technology and information, health and wellness, and humanities and social sciences.

"In looking at the budget, we recognized we needed to make some hard decisions to maintain a balanced budget and to ensure that our financial situation didn't get out of hand," said Wark. "But ultimately, the goal of all this is to try to raise the quality of what we do here."

"We're not going to be able to do it if we try to be all things to all people," he added.

"We need to figure where our strengths are and focus on that."

Wark admits that the situation is a less than favourable one, but sees little alternative in a changing education landscape.

"Post-secondary institutions across Canada are being faced with new fiscal realities. You have to plan where you're going to get the most bang for your buck, and where you're going to move forward the most," he said.

Matt Stambaugh, president of the University of Calgary Students' Union, agrees with Wark that cuts are necessary, but admits to being concerned where the cuts will take the school.

"My worry is that we're looking at too much of a corporate model, putting more money into faculties that are already doing well at the expense of others that aren't doing so well fiscally. It just means that certain faculties will flourish while others will just kind of wither around them."

"My fear is that only certain areas will move ahead, which will increase pressure to implement differential tuition, which in turn will create sort of elitist hierarchy here on campus," he added.

But ultimately, Stambaugh places most of the blame on the province's lack of funding to post-secondary education.

"A large part of the budget problem is due to promises from the province [for more funding] that were pulled out from under us, leaving us hanging. The University of Alberta is feeling this too," he said. "But this is a fiscal reality. I mean, the university has some areas where they could reduce spending, and that's exactly what they're doing."

"But when you look at our situation, it really does come down to the provincial government. Honest to God, we've got to get more money into universities," said Stambaugh. "We're seriously pricing a large section of society right out of an education and that's not right."

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Editorial

There's the rub (but where's the tug?)

Remember the scene in *Back To The Future II* where Michael J. Fox is running from 1950s bully Biff Tannen's son (it was the future, remember?) and he grabs a kid's hoverboard and flies to safety?

Weren't you excited for the day when the future finally arrived and hoverboard technology became cheap and plentiful?

Didn't you want one?

The Martlet sure did.

Flash forward to right now: It's the last issue of 2002. The holidays are coming. The future is here. So where are the hoverboards?

Well, the sad truth is that hoverboards never existed, and probably never will. It's the same old story every year. We wanted something and didn't get it. This year *the Martlet*'s list is simple: low tuition fees and free passes to *Rub and Tug*. But we probably won't get those either.

We're OK with that. The holidays are about giving, not receiving. Like on Monday, when you made a donation at *the Martlet*'s Fish Pond in the SUB. You went fishing, hoping maybe for the new Smashing Pumpkins album. Instead you got a hip-hop disc by some guy named PIMP-T.

But that was OK, too. You kept your cool. You knew that what mattered was the contribution you made to the Mustard Seed Food Bank, not the damn CD you got in return. So what if your "donation" was a tin of canned ham you found on the Free Food Table across the hall? It's the thought that counts.

Remember when we said all we wanted was reduced tuition fees and *Rub and Tug* passes? Well, since then we thought of some other things.

We want everyone to like us. We asked for this one back in September, but it hasn't quite come true yet. Pretty much everyone tolerates us – some with thinly veiled contempt – but not everyone genuinely likes us. Maybe that's something we can work on for next semester.

We want more of you to come and write for us. People say, There's not enough of this or that in *the Martlet*. We say, Bring it on. Whatever you like. Get involved. It's what you make it. We like to make new friends.

Speaking of friends, we'd secretly like PIMP-T to be our friend again. Hey, Troy, that review did look kind of negative on the page, but it was meant with love. We didn't give your CD away in the fish pond. The editor-in-chief rescued it. It has sentimental value, believe it or not.

What else do we want?

It's our last issue of the semester. We want to get a little crazy. We want to dress like Joan Crawford and say, "Christina, get me the axe" or "Don't fuck with me, fellas" whenever we're frustrated.

We – like Freddie Mercury – want it all. We want to get some fun out of life, dammit. We don't just want the rub – we want the tug, too.

Okay, what else... Well, world peace. Of course we want that, but it seems about as likely as reduced tuition fees at this point.

But we might as well wish for it anyway.

'Tis the season, after all. Thanks for coming out.

Editorial topics are decided on by staff at editorial meetings. Editorials are written by one or more staff members, and are not necessarily the opinion of all staff members.

Don't like what you read?
Write us, or write *for* us: martlet@uvic.ca

The Martlet has revised its advertising boycott list.

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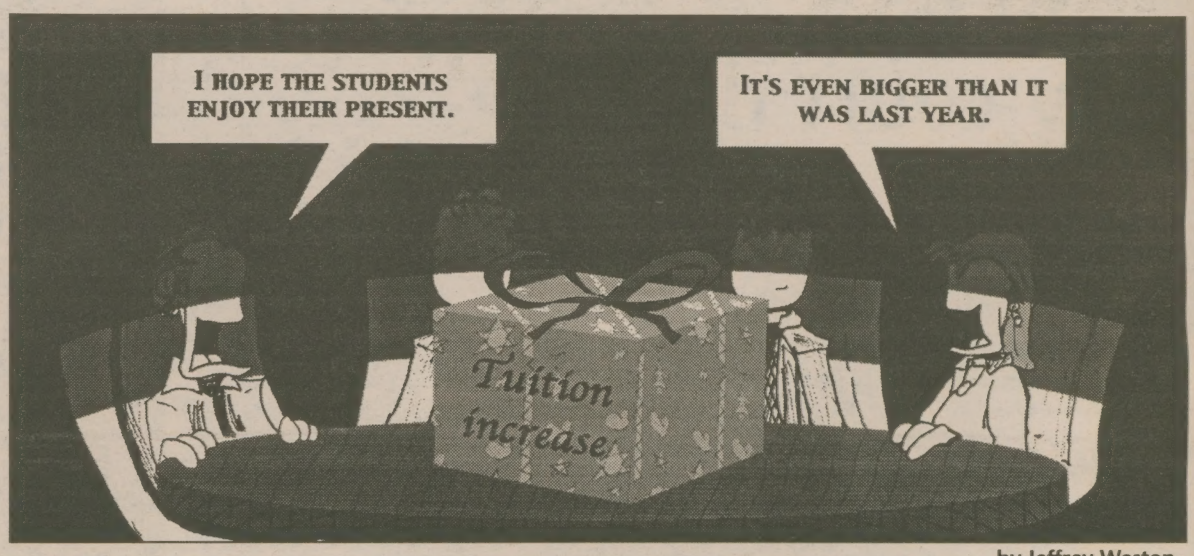
sub b011



UVIC BOARD OF GOVERNORS

by Jeffrey Weston

Indigenous Perspectives I

Winter Feast leaves room for ceremony

by Wil George

O'Siem Na Si'aya, I'm Wil George from the Tsleil Waututh Nation (Burrard Indian Band) in North Vancouver, B.C. I would like to acknowledge the Lekwungun, Equimalt, and Saanich Nations upon whose territories we live and study upon.

Traditionally, within Coast Salish practices, winter is a time for feasting and ceremony.

In respect of Salish feasting practices and providing Aboriginal students with social and cultural events throughout the school year, the Native Students Union of UVic (NSU), an organization of Aboriginal students from various nations across the continent, strives to organize events that are culturally relevant to Aboriginal students. For example, each year in December, the NSU along with the First Nation Student Association at Camosun College organizes a Winter Feast on campus. It is an end of term get-together as well as a cultural celebration for winter.

The Winter Feast features traditional Aboriginal dishes such as elk or deer and salmon, as well as turkey and stuffing.

I had the opportunity to attend the last three Winter Feasts. Last year, we filled the small Michèle Pujol Room in the SUB. It is a family oriented event and there were many children at the feast. Santa made his appearance along with elves.

Following the meal and Santa's visit there were presentations of stories, poetry and teachings or advice from local community members. Last year's Winter Feast was very enjoyable and a good opportunity to visit with other Aboriginal people.

This year's Santa will have an Aboriginal look to his wardrobe.

South Island singers and dancers from the Esquimalt Nation are going to perform at this year's feast.

Indigenous Perspectives II

Hunger of the imagination: I still believe

by Gordon de Frane

It is our hunger of the imagination that propels us to the moon, to reach for the stars; to welcome into our homes a jolly, rounded figure of man in a red suit trimmed in white, each 25th of December.

My elders have taught me that the most difficult journey we could ever make is not to the moon, is not to colonize some distant light in the night sky.

Our most challenging journey, they assure me, is traversing the gulf between that of our minds and our hearts.

A season of light is fast upon us. I know this because it seems that sometime in August I was sure that I had seen the first tell-tale signs of the impending consumer madness. I realized in that moment that it was only a short march of months away. The message murmured and whispered said that, in only four short months, an orgy of gratuitous giving was about to get underway.

Are you ready?

More recently, the first in the parade of Christmas Specials on TV was beamed into our living rooms and places of hearth and home.

It's our hunger of the imagination that allows us to believe in a mystical being dressed in red serge and trimmed in white mink.

It also allows us to say that this happy fellow lives in the far North Pole. It is further said that he is rather fond of children.

The legends say that he and his helpers spend 364 days of the year preparing for that one big night on December 25, since the birth of the sacrifice.

For most of my youth, my imagination was active in the belief of the Big Guy in red. No, not any one of the Bishops or Monsignors of the Holy Roman See.

I think I was 9 or 10 when I had my first unsupervised visit in my parent's bedroom. That's when my imagination was altered. For those parents out there whose bedrooms are off-limits to your children, I recommend installing child-proof locks.

And whatever you do, do not hide gifts from Santa under the bed – a child's gaze is at that beneath the bed level.

We see everything from down there.

So be forewarned. If you follow those simple steps, you may be able to extend that magical period of belief for your children for an extra year or two at least.

Personally, I'm still not sure that I ever got over the revelation that my imagination's hunger was less then true.

But while my imagination suffered a blow and my willingness to suspend reality over Santa was now sharply curtailed, I can still remember an experience following my epiphany. I had an encounter with the uncanny, as Freud is wont to say. To this day, the memories of that night still whisper softly over the glowing embers of my imagination.

I had stirred from my pillow and left for a short respite my dreams of sugar plums and chocolates and Japanese Mandarins – you could still buy them then without taking out a mortgage or promising your first born – and such delights.

Rather unusually, nature had called you see.

So I crept from my bed. Rubbed the sleep from my eyes and stumbled to the washroom – I tried "loo" here but it sounded like some received pronunciation lingo. Anyway, after doing my business, I made my way back along the same warm and familiar linoleum path that pointed me to my bed.

As I passed through the still passageways of my home, I thought I would give my imagination's hunger one more kick at the can.

I took up residence at a safe distance from the tree that stood at the centre of the room.

I had reasoned that it was still early and that Canada's proximity and postal code meant that my home would be nearer the end of the list then at the top.

I wrapped myself in a blanket, like every good little half-breed boy, and waited.

[2002/2003]
martlet
UVic's Student Paper

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letters: *the Martlet* has an open letters policy and will endeavour to print every letter received from the university community, with priority given to undergraduate students. Letters must be typewritten, submitted on disk or by e-mail and include your name and student number for verification. Letters must be 200 words maximum. Deadline for letters is noon on the Friday before publication date. Letters will be prioritized by order received. Letters with pseudonyms or group names will not be printed.

op/ed submissions: *The Martlet* welcomes submissions for the opinions section, maximum 600 words.

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on the spot

Mixmaster: Rich Cole
Sound effects: Robin Platts
Backstage footage: Jeff Andrew

Wanna drop some rhymes?

Jay Handel
Zack Stevenson
Mike Klemak
Annette Dreefhen
4th year Theatre

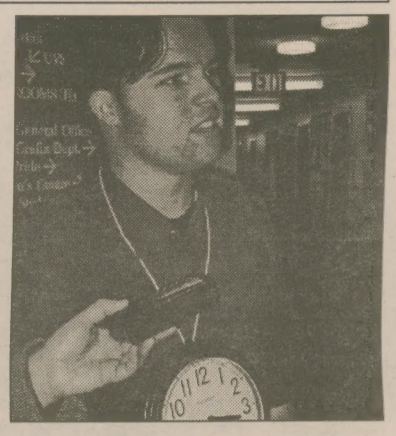
[*Martlet team bursts into a Phoenix Theatre rehearsal room.*]
Rich: So you wanna drop some rhymes?
[*Rich hits play on the Casio, group busts out a freestyle jam featuring beatbox, scratching and bootyshaking.*]
MC Handel: Now a .38 / Down from the roof / Man can't hide 'cause he's got no proof /
That he's from the Lord / The Man from above / He's gonna hide / Or go on the shove / Come on!

(Beat break)

MC Handel: He don't shave / Just walks down the street / The boy can't find / That he's 'fraid of Neet / He wears a black robe / His hair's on fire / He's gone all day / He's got desire!

Amanda McCabe
1st Year History

Rich: So you wanna bust some rhymes?
Amanda: What is this?
Robin: It's kind of like *Star Search*.
[*Rich cues up an old-school Casio beat.*]
Robin: How's that groove for you? Too fast? Too slow?
Amanda: I'm really at a loss here.
Joanna Groves ("J-Gro"): Do the Funky Chicken!
Robin: Get jiggy wit' it.
Amanda: Alright. (*breaks into a groovy spoken word piece*)
The rain falls on campus
and lo
exam time is near.
Robin: Have you got anything more urban?



Ryan David Rutley
3rd Year Sociology

Rich: You wanna bust some rhymes?
Ryan: Yeah, I think I can do this.
[*Proceeds to bust rhymes while bystanders in the SUB pretend not to notice*]
DJ spinnin' on the wheels o' steel /
Like it ain't no thing / 'Cause he is for real /
He be cuttin' the jams with a wave of his hand / Sounds so good it'll make you stand /
He got highs in your eyes / bass in your face / This stupid dj / Can rock the place /
He got highs / lows / tremblin' toes /
He can even rock the jams without the earphones!

letters

Three weeks later and still no word back from Sophie

We the engineers?
Upon reading *the Fishwrap*, a publication of the Engineering Students' Society (ESS), I came across some appalling articles, including two trashing the "hippie" scene at UVic.

I'm embarrassed for the authors of these articles, and I'm ashamed at the ESS for publishing what some might consider hate literature. Engineering students have a bad enough reputation for being antisocial "tech-geeks." It seems that this volume of the *Fishwrap* sets the grounds for a new stereotype of engineering students that involves right-wing corporatist hippie-bashing ideals.

The "get-a-job-hippie" philosophy portrayed in *the Fishwrap* is an indication that these individuals think that they are better than those of other social groups because of the potential career that they anticipate.

Keep this in mind: someday the students that made these absurd statements will be professionals and their hard work and skills may help save large corporations lots of money. Such achievements will not benefit the individual.

On the other hand, those who took part in the recent protests against tuition hikes have at least made an attempt to improve the problem of high tuition costs and student debts.

In one article, the student addresses the readers as, "...WE THE ENGINEERS..." as if all engineering students share his opinions.

As an engineering student, I certainly don't stand for such discrimination.

Brian Hoff
4th Year Engineering Student

Clarifying Dallas
I'm writing to take exception with the comments in *the Martlet*, and the flyers which have been circulated around campus by a 'mystery group' of students defaming Mr. Dallas Henault.

It is my interpretation, based on Mr. Henault's comments in *the Martlet*, CFUV's Propaganda Machine, and the *Vancouver Sun*, that he is not against mandatory student fees for services such as *the Martlet*, CFUV, the Women's Centre. My interpretation is that he is only against funding the CFS – not the UVSS. However, letters and editorial comments have suggested he is in favour of making the latter optional. Perhaps Mr. Henault could clarify his position for the benefit of us all. I believe there should always be funding for such services as the paper, the radio station, the Women's Centre, and the Ombudsperson, but perhaps the debate should be centred around whether they should be tied to mandatory funding for political activism – another whole debate in itself!

As for this controversy over mandatory funding, I feel that either way, students should be free to express their own views without fear of retribution or harassment from other students. A university should be a place for different minds to come together and a place where different ideas can flow freely. One does not have to agree with everything they read, see, or hear, but one should be able to be comforted, somewhat, in hearing a voice of opposition – despite the fact they disagree – because it proves that we live in a place where we are all able speak freely and convey our ideas to the rest of the world without fear of retribution for doing so. And I think that is one thing everyone wants, deserves and should strive to protect.

Tom Grainger

Defending Ben
As a member of the VCE executive, I would like to say Michael Gardiner's views in last week's letter are not representative of all members of the VCE. I would like to apologize to Ben Isitt for any misunderstandings and to anyone who did vote for Ben for mayor – some people feel that he would be a better mayor than Alan Lowe. We did not vote to reject Ben, we chose not to run a candidate for mayor, Ben or otherwise.

Andrea Mears

it's fee levy refund cheque dispersal time!

That's right!

If you want to sign away your right to read, use and look at your student paper in exchange for $3.75 (the portion of your student fees that goes to *the Martlet*), drop by *the Martlet* office (sub b011) on December 5th, 2002.

Hot Hot Hanukkah
by Suzanne Beaubien

Too many Christmas pictures in my album speak of sadness. Fights. A divorce. A cat that knocks down our Christmas tree every day until my mom puts the tree, decorations and all, in a closet down the hall, to be brought out only once the cat is safely locked in my bedroom.

A few years ago I went AWOL. Called it quits. I now show up only for dinner and go home once the dishes are put away and the leftovers wrapped. I don't buy presents, but bring games to distract everyone, so we don't have to talk outside of phrases such as "Sorry," "Balderdash" and "Taboo." So on the second day of Hanukkah – a holiday I have never celebrated – defecting doesn't seem like a problem. My family will not be there. My friend Elly invited me to make Hanukkah dinner with her. *Mazaltov!* I said and trucked downtown with her to look for a Menorah in the midst of Christmas shopping madness that lines the streets with fervent people.

Ironically enough, the only place we can think to go is the Christmas Store. But the only ones they carry are 60 dollars apiece so, defeated, we retreat to the mall and then Paboom on View St., where we pick up a simple nine-candle menorah for $7.95. Menorah candles are exorbitantly expensive, however, so Elly sends me running to the dollar store for birthday cake candles while she waits in the long lineup to pay.

On the menu for the evening are Matzo ball soup, potato latkes, and Jewish doughnuts that end up looking and tasting like buttermilk pancakes. Hanukkah food is fried in plenty of oil, she says, to celebrate the miracle of oil that lasted for eight days when the Jews were doing something, somewhere, she's not sure what. A convenient Christian for much of my life, i.e. only on Christmas, I have no problem with the vagueness of the tradition we are upholding. As the goy, I am Elly's prep cook and dish pig, grating potatoes, squeezing them through a j-cloth, washing and rewashing the only large bowl, and absorbing the smell of the oil into my hair and clothes. As we cook, I make up new lyrics to the only Jewish song I know: "Latke, latke, latke. I fried it in some oil. Latke, latke, latke. And now it's going to boil." Hours into our preparations, Hot Hot Heat arrives, wearing hair yamulkes, to eat the food, which we serve in courses. Soup first, then a salad someone brought, then latkes and okra, followed by the doughnut/pancakes. After we eat, Elly lights one white candle with which to light the other two and someone sings "Happy Birthday."

We don't take any pictures. But we don't yell and throws things either, so Hanukkah goes down as a winning holiday in my book. Elly e-mails me the next day and says I can help peel pomegranates for Rosh Hashana in the spring. I can't wait.

The Hoop Was A Christmas Gift
by Craig Battle

Here's one from the Christmas album.

We are playing basketball on the new hoop. Chris and me, one-on-one on the sleek cement shared by the family cars. We stand face-to-face, feature-to-feature in the shadow of a backboard nailed to the top of the shed. His 12 years to my 10. His muscles to my elbows. His dark, even tone to my pale skin and freckles. His aggressive blue eyes and deep brown hair to my shy green and strawberry blond.

Chris has first ball. It's only fair. He gives me a head start (20 points in a game to 21), and I give him the ball. It should be simple for me, he says. All I have to do is score once. A layup. A hook shot. A desperation jumper. Anything. Just one bucket and I take the crown for a day. It seems fair, but of course it never is.

He drops into three-point stance. Three points. Right knee to right elbow to ball. I learned this in gym class. He can drive, shoot or pass from this position, but he's thinking drive. He always drives and he always goes right. I bend my knees like a cowboy waiting for the draw and I have a plan to stop him. I slide left, my legs wide and hands up in proper defensive stance, and cut off his lane. I am ready. He isn't getting around me. Not this time. I am ready.

However, Chris has an alternative plan. He bounces the ball between my legs, runs by me and pulls it from the air before I can turn around. He dribbles once and lays the ball safely home. He is on his way to another 21-point run and the victory. As usual, I don't touch the ball once, and he beats me simply with his presence.

I can't win if I don't score. I can't score if I don't touch the ball. I can't touch the ball if I don't stop his drive. I can't stop his drive. He is bigger and stronger and in seventh grade and he knows how to dribble. Even between his legs. I know what "defensive stance" means – not how it's useful.

I ask for a rematch. I always ask for a rematch but I never score. He gets progressively higher on himself as the afternoon drags on and he brags incessantly. He commentates in the third person. Chris is so good. Oh my God. Did you see that? By the third game and his fiftieth straight point he turns his attention from himself to me. He gets quite insulting and tells me that I suck ass. That's when I start to cry. And my tears always signal the end of the game.

I don't win until I turn 14. He is drunk or high and I beat him without shoes or socks, but that's another photograph in another album.

I Remember That Christmas
I Was The bulldozer
by Sarah Petrescu

We are sitting on the haggard patio furniture in the makeshift garden/smokepit outside the psychiatric ward at Lions Gate Hospital. It is a crisp March morning. Mom and Dad take nervous staccato drags and stare at one another. My 21-year-old brother Nick leans back in his white plastic lawn chair and green hospital smock. He holds his

cigarette close while his hands tremor from the medications.

This is his new home. He doesn't seem to notice much. He just talks. He talks a lot – almost shrieks – about angels, evil, Gordon Campbell, the CIA, our parents' brief break-up, my "perfect" escape. He's truthful, like a child. Today he is telling us about the tattoos he's gonna get when he gets out of there. He wants his entire body covered, and he wants one for each of us - to represent who we are to him. For me, he wants a bulldozer. He's ecstatic.

I'm not surprised. I'm an older sister and I can be tough. But tough is how we communicate, me and Nick, tough is how we work.

I remember that Christmas I was the bulldozer. The four of us had done our usual Christmas-morning dance opening presents, with less enthusiasm each year, our actions more awash in the hand-over-fist consumption of coffee, cigarettes, and Italian pastries. This year we had a different game plan. We were volunteering for a "feed the less fortunate" community dinner at the Robert's Creek Hall. This year we were doing something meaningful.

My dad had the 30-pound turkey stuffed, wrapped and in the trunk of the car. My mom scraped the ice off the windshield as I put on my wool socks and gumboots. Nick stood in the doorway with a frightened look.

"Let's go," I said.

No response.

"Get your shoes on. None of this bullshit. Not now. This is really important to Mom and Dad. Let's go."

He lit a smoke. "I'm not going. Just go. No one will notice."

By now, my parents had noticed. They stood staring at him, cow-eyed and tense. My brother hadn't left the house in weeks. In fact, he'd only been out a few times in the last six months. He confined himself to his room – playing guitar, reading, and writing about his paranoias, about how people hated him and how he was afraid of nearly everything. But he seemed to be doing better. He had even promised to come with us, which is why we committed to going. This was a family mission. It was Christmas. He had to come.

So there we were – Christmas Day, doorway, face-off. What ensued next was an all-out shakedown. Months of patience and fragility crumbled under one not-so-subtle refusal.

I bulldozed. I yelled. I swore. I threw his shoes at him. I dragged his twice-my-size twitching body outside and into the back of the car. Mom was crying and Dad was hopping in the driver's seat. Nick yelled. He told me he hated me, that he couldn't do it, that I always did this. It was half-hearted. He was safe with us and he knew it.

We arrived at the hall full of hungry families, single elderlies, and vagrant young hippies that trademark the small community. It took Nick two hours to get out of the car and to come in to eat with us all. This was the farthest he'd been from our home in nearly a year. He gradually began to get more comfortable. He even chatted with a few people and helped pack up the leftovers to take to the food bank. At the end of the evening we sat on the bumper of our parents' car and watched the snow fall while he smoked. He thanked me for making him come. He had had a good time and he didn't feel so afraid anymore.

As I remember that Christmas, I stand not listening to where his incessant banter has taken the conversation. I wonder where his nurse is. I wonder how much longer they'll keep him here. I wonder if he'll ever be "normal" again, or at least the way he was. I feel guilty about that Christmas I was the bulldozer. I feel guilty for letting my love become anger, for thinking I had all his answers. This year I'll go as far as he goes and I'll be thankful.

Assembly Day
by Zoë Bake-Paterson

Damn it!

My mother's first words all morning, after a sizzling sound emits from the kitchen. I can hear the tap turn on.

It is day two of the gingerbread house tradition. Assembly day.

Yesterday was the baking day. Two mothers and three daughters mass-producing bowls of shiny brown cookie-dough, rolling it flat and cutting carefully measured slabs. Flour and spices powdered the air so thickly that I coughed non-stop from breathing raw cinnamon and nutmeg. My sister spilled molasses syrup on the cat.

Ah, tradition.

The heat and gingery cooking smells made me heady as batch after batch went into the oven. There was a familiar stress as the family bustled around, checking the gingerbread in the oven. I was designated to clear space for the pieces to cool and promptly knocked two off the counter. I was banned from the kitchen.

I escaped into the quieter living room, lit with tiny white Christmas lights. Folding into the couch, I sat and attempted to clean the matted mess of cat. I dreamt about my house decorations for the following day.

I am nine years old and already this tradition is imbedded in my holiday memories.

The house wakes up early on day two. My mother's preparing for the assembly day. The coffee begins to brew and burnt sugar boils in a pan, waiting for slabs of hardened gingerbread to be dipped in and then cemented together. This is the key to sturdy construction. And the houses have to be sturdy. Tomorrow, the three children will insist on bringing them, sugar coatings and all, when they go to their father's house for the week.

The stovetop hisses and burns as my mother balances piece against piece, slowly building houses. She insists it is easier alone, with only 10 fingers dipping into the scalding pan. My sisters and I take the opportunity to make icing, fingers dipping into the bowl and spreading sticky sweetness everywhere. There is another altercation with the cat, icing sugar this time. Chaos takes over again. It is 10 in the morning.

By noon, I have discovered I can fit six large marshmallows in my mouth at once.

Mid-afternoon, five tent-shaped houses perch on tin-foil wrapped cardboard, waiting on the kitchen table.

Then it becomes a question of pleasure or art, knowing that whatever is on my house I get to eat later, but really, shredded wheat makes the best roofing. The quaint little cabin? Or something from the *Hansel and Gretal* fairytale? My mothers go for cabins, my sisters and I for the fairytale thing. We dive for the candy and decorations. The key to making a gingerbread house is to slip extras candies through the windows to store for later. Marshmallows work best.

Three hours later, five little cardboard-coloured houses – lined with smartie Christmas lights, fences made with pretzels and glowing white snow gobs of icing – sit on the table.

Our cat has lodged herself under the couch and my mother is nursing a burnt finger. The three of us kids are wired on saccharine sweets and bounce around attempting to clean. I have now mastered seven marshmallows in my mouth at one time.

Another successful round of gingerbreadhousing is complete.

Humbugs and Happy Holidays

winter tales from *the Martlet* files

Throw it all away with The Fine Options

photo by Vanessa Neuman

Colin McKill and Rrob Kavanagh bust some chops.

by Vanessa Neuman

I want The Fine Options to be my friends – they're too much fun. After I get the grand tour of their house, and Rrob saves my ass by getting me a tape recorder (the batteries in mine died two minutes into the interview), we get down to serious business.

Well, sort of. We do the interview, but not the serious. This is pure gold.

The Fine Options originally hail from Saskatoon. The band consists of four members (Colin McKill, Rrob Kavanagh, Bryce Janssens and Conor Matthews) and five instruments (two guitars, bass, drums and sometimes organ). When I ask why they moved out here, the unanimous response is to escape the prairie winters.

"It sounds like a cliché thing to say," admits Colin, "but we were honestly going to die, or end up killing each other, or going into a mental asylum, or something horrible, so we moved to Victoria and then everything was happy again."

When I ask them to describe their music, Rrob looks me directly in the eye and deadpans, "Brilliant. Next question." Then, worried that they might look like assholes, he changes it to a self-deprecating, "It sucks."

But what is their music like really? Well, their live shows are loud. Crazy loud sometimes, but in a good way.

This isn't the kind of music where you strain to hear what the musicians are playing through the distortion. This is, as one guy I talked to put it, "A thousand whispering sunsets run through a feedback loop and boosted to sick volumes."

Imagine that if you can.

During the interview I look across the table to see three equally impish grins. I'm not sure how much these guys tell me is actually true and how much is them just having fun. It doesn't matter. It's a much better interview if the people make you laugh and go off on tangents than if they answer your questions with pat, memorized responses.

How are you supposed to learn about people if they won't let you see their personalities?

How the Fine Options get along seems to have a lot to do with what they sound like as a band. Disregarding the fact that three of the four members live in the same house, they count themselves as the biggest influence on their sound.

"If Rrob does something cool on guitar then I try and do something way cooler, so that people pay attention to me," says Colin, with a rueful smile. It is obvious though, that while there may be some "sibling rivalry" between the members of the band, they're all good friends. They feed off each other, often taking the interview to ridiculous levels.

photo by Vanessa Neuman

Doing something cool, *cooler*.

Case in point: Once they have told me all about the guy who's producing their first album (due out in February/March), and how he's good with computers, they proceed to tell me that because of their burning hatred for the infernal machines they will be recording the album on a typewriter.

Two actually.

"So, it's in stereo sound," I'm told.

After having thoroughly enjoyed their opening set at the *Grace Nocturnal* CD release party, I am offered an invitation to hang out with the band post-show. I accept, on the pretense of doing more research.

Anything to get the story, right?

It pans out. Not only is this a highly amusing way to spend a Saturday night, I also get the chance to hear some songs that Rrob, Bryce and Colin have recorded on their digital 8-track. It's cool, kind of spacey and very melodic – different from what they play during their live shows. Appreciative comments from other people in the room tell me that I'm not the only person enjoying this.

Unfortunately, it became clear to me over the course of writing this story that I will probably never be a reporter for *Rolling Stone* magazine. I do believe that I have now broken some of the most important rules of rock journalism:

1. Don't become friendly with the band,

2. Don't party with the band after the show and

3. Don't crash on their spare bed when it's 5 o'clock in the morning and you're too broke to catch a cab home.

Sigh. I had such high hopes for my future career. Anyone who was looking for an unbiased article – sorry to disappoint you. This is not it. But here is my best shot.

Come and see the Fine Options play on Dec. 6. They're fun. They're energetic. They put on a good show. You'll be supporting a first-rate local band.

And if that's not enough, Rrob will be smashing his guitar over Bryce's head during the performance. At least, that's what he told me.

The Fine Options play with Complete and The Weakerthans on Friday, Dec. 6 at Lucky Bar. Tickets are $15 and can be bought at Ditch Records, Lyle's Place, Lucky Bar and ticketweb.com

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The heartache and the doggerel of small press

by Nick Thran

Got no balls & got no dough
All I get's a bone or so.
So I'm givin' up the arts
And throwin' out the pen
I'm going into business. That's it. Amen.
"Doggone Blues" from *Victor's Verses*

It seems poetry has finally gone to the dogs.

Reputable Victoria small press Outlaw Editions has recently put out a small collection of poems ascribed to one furry little guy named Victor. It's a clever idea, more suited to a campfire or parlour game, something you might imagine a group of poets doing after a few glasses of wine.

As a book, it'll have you reaching for the pooper-scooper.

If the opening quote doesn't have you scratching your ears already, let me just say that the whole collection, for no reason my human mind can figure out, is almost entirely written in end rhyme.

Not-so-subtle prods are made at the poetics of Anne Sexton (see "Confession"), Allen Ginsberg (see "Victor's Apparition in India"), and Gwendolyn MacEwan (see "Shadow-Dog").

We're asked to try and have a little fun, as Victor seems resolved "to write less of angst and less of ill." All that's well and good if the fun is actually FUNNY. But it isn't. *Victor's Verses* just has a lot of respectable poets like George Bowering and Jay Ruzesky – poets with bite – wasting their time on a toothless collection that does little more than – in the dog's own words – "pee into the sink."

The night I saw the *Verses* launched at Mocambo Café, I heard a young Victoria-based poet named Bren Simmers read at the open mic.

Easily the highlight of the evening, I inquired about a copy of the chapbook she was reading from, the self-published *on everyone's station, someone else's heartache,* and made it my evening's purchase.

While the *Verses* cover shows us the wiley dog chewing up a piece of paper, *heartache*'s cover is a picture of a handheld Toshiba transistor radio. Here is someone with something to say.

First off, I laughed more reading *heartache* than I ever did reading *Victor's Verses*; the poet at one point imagines herself "a backwoods Jimmy Swaggart with a rusty pickup truck/ and a clapboard confession shack/ in the back, laying hands/ on small town girls done wrong."

Yet these are poems that take risks to try and make room for a range of emotions.

In the title poem, for example, she successfully inhabits the confusion and grief of her speaker, an unidentified "you," as well as Al Purdy's wife, Eurithe, as they make up "the three radio broadcasts playing simultaneously in [her] head."

On everyone else's station, someone else's heartache is a fine example of the small press done well.

Victor's Verses *should be available at your local independent bookstore. Bren, meanwhile, probably has a few of the 100 copies of her book at the bottom of her knapsack. The back cover says she works part-time in the UVic library. Good luck trying to hook a copy up.*

In search of a little something Weakerthans

by Mark Samcoe

Transcripts of messages left on the telephone of John K. Samson, lead singer of the Weakerthans:

Monday, Nov. 25, 10:57 a.m.

Hi John, my name's Mark and I write for *the Martlet*, the University of Victoria's student newspaper. I'd like to interview you for a story I'm writing previewing your show at Lucky Bar on the sixth of December. You can reach me in the office at 250-721-8360. Talk to you later. Bye.

Thursday, Nov. 28, 2:43 p.m.

Hi John, it's Mark from *the Martlet* calling again. I was hoping I could speak with you tomorrow, Friday, at one o'clock, central time, if that's where you are. Again, the number at the office is 250-721-8360. Call and leave a message if this doesn't work for you. Thanks. Bye.

Friday, Nov. 29, 11:47 p.m.

John, what's going on? I've got an empty bottle of Colt 45 in my hand. Shit, I just stepped on my nail clippers. Hey, did you know they make Clodhoppers in Winnipeg? Hey D, put on that Johnny Cash Nine Inch Nails cover. You gotta hear it. D, crank that shit. John, man, it's so good. Or, as I heard a couple guys on bikes say tonight, "Super choice." They were talking about some bike trail. Whatever. When did adjectives get so lame? Okay, I gotta go, our cab's here. We should chat. Call me at home. The number is [*inaudible*]. D, just leave it. I'll deal with it tomorrow. John, did you get that? My roommate wants me to throw out this jug of milk that expired a month ago so he can fit more lemons in the fridge. Long story. Ciao.

Saturday, Nov. 30, 2:14 p.m.

Hey John, sorry about last night. It was the Colt. Somehow they've bottled the essence of a 16-year-old heterosexual male – the demographic they're gunning for, I'm guessing. I mean, fucking Billy Dee Williams. Lando. Gayle Sayers. Brian's Song. James Caan. You wanna talk word association. You want me to rely on obscure pop culture references for humour? How about sex and drugs. Can't go wrong there. Shit, look at the label. A red bronco bucking inside a golden horseshoe. I don't need to lecture you on symbolism. You wrote "rely a bit too heavily on alcohol and irony, get clobbered on by courtesy, in love with love and lousy poetry." You know.The Colt 45 label is saying drink this shit and with a bit of luck, you'll alleviate those blue balls, 'cuz it's gonna take more than a leg kick to loosen what's tied around that nutsack. Acne, bad hair, Levi's orange tabs, whatever's holding you back. Hey, Alden Nowlan has this poem, "The Broadcaster's poem," and in it this car gets run over by a train, and the radio keeps playing, like to the dead. And how the broadcaster couldn't go on talking if he knew about what a fucked-up world it is outside his little booth. I'm that car. You're that broadcaster. Shit, I gotta flip my omelette.

Monday, December 2, 12:45 a.m.

John, I don't know if you got my last message or what. Was it something I said?

photo provided

There was no love for Samcoe from these emo rockers.

Step off, Babs: the Disco Bondage Prostitutes have landed

by Aynsley Friesen

It's the spotlight operator's first day and he hasn't quite got the hang of it. From the partially lit dance floor, the mistress of ceremonies is berating him, cursing him, his efforts and abilities or lack thereof. He manages to turn the spotlight on, illuminating his tormentor and revealing her to the audience gathered around the dance floor.

She is wearing an off-white satin robe; pink satin and black lace peek out from beneath it. Her black wig is teased to within an inch of its life; her heavily made-up face makes her look eerily like Joan Crawford. Glitter covers her in a dazzling mantle and an enormous mirrored sequin sparkles under one eye. In four-inch heels, she stands about six-foot five.

Her stage name is She'lleata Bouffe. Her real name is David. She is the captain of the Disco Bondage Prostitutes from Outer Space.

As the spotlight operator's struggle continues, so does the abuse from Miss Bouffe. The regulars in the audience contribute enthusiastic heckles and jibes. They are cut short by their hostess, who reminds them of where they are.

What's the first rule of Drag-o-rama?

"When the queen talks…," says Bouffe to her audience.

"Shut the fuck up!" the audience answers automatically.

After ensuring that the unruly crowd is aware that the third rule of Drag-o-rama is "Drag queens love shooters – buy us some," the captain introduces the night's show, entitled *Drunken Drag Queens on Drugs: Bitter about Love and Relationships, Part 32*.

This is only the beginning of a weekly phenomenon – Sunday night at Hush Cabaret.

The Disco Bondage Prostitutes (DBP) have been doing drag shows in Victoria for the last seven years. Although their line-up and venue have changed more than once during this time, their core members remain the same. For the last two years, they have lip-synched their tales of love lost, bitterness and survival to a loyal following, as well as tourists and curiosity seekers.

Holly Devor, a UVic sociology professor, believes that Hollywood is taking a more relaxed approach to drag performances, and that this positive attention is a step in the right direction.

"We're seeing a lot more openness to transgendered expressions," she says.

What the inquiring minds coming to a show for the first time may not know is that these are not your average drag queens. Their outlook and attitudes are quite different from those of most drag performers, including those portrayed in mainstream Hollywood.

Everyone knows what drag queens look like. Since Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon donned wigs and dresses in *Some Like it Hot* the entertainment industry has become increasingly comfortable with drag, introducing us to characters like Divine, Rupaul and the casts of *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* and *La Cage aux Folles*.

We have become aware of the stereotypical mystique surrounding Judy Garland, Liza Minelli, Barbra Streisand and Cher, and the unmitigated desire cross-dressing males possess to emulate them.

Not necessarily so, say the DBP. This group of five men and one woman have no illusions about what they do. They do not want to follow the traditional drag-show model.

"We impersonate ourselves," says Vicki Lick'er, also known as Gregg Nord. "We know we're just men in dresses."

They also poke fun at the traditional drag hierarchy. It is common in drag troupes for members to assume almost familial roles – from the drag matriarch, who rules the roost, to the ingénue. Since no such structure exists among the DBP, they decided to create a fictional one. But, instead of following the traditional roles, they have transformed themselves into the crew of a star ship, the DBP5, with specific titles assigned to each of them. They say they don't take this history or their self-appointed roles seriously; they just made it up to amuse themselves.

In addition to Nord, whose role on the DBP5 is "Ballas," the Disco Bondage Prostitutes are made up of dj and director Brett Carmichael, who serves a behind-the-scenes role, "Gunner" Princess Psycho Bruce (Bruce Giles), "PYT" Elektra Sockett (Josh Martin), "Control Freak and Costume Designer" Baby April (April Stewart), "Omnipresent Guest Star" Kelly Kelly Kelly Kelly (Kelly Cruikshank), and "Captain" Bouffe (David Tillson).

They hold regular jobs ranging from bar manager to makeup artist and hairdresser. Drag on weekends is for fun.

Part of the fun is the planning, rehearsing and choreography that comes with each show. Every week, through a combination of booze and brainstorming, the DBP come up with a new theme show that showcases their love of satire and allows them to use their demented, and sometimes morbid, sense of humour.

Despite the fact that the lip-synching format is a traditional drag show technique, the rest of the show bucks the drag status quo. Each show tells a story, and the theme changes from week to week. Rather than impersonate specific celebrities, each character embodies a specific attitude and the group designs both the numbers for the show and the accompanying choreography to reflect this. The stage allows these drama queens enough room to be intimate with, or distant from, their audience.

photo provided

Don't expect to be handled gently by this group of coif and gams.

Although they choose to impersonate personality types rather than celebrities, they will on occasion make an exception and pay homage to stars, as they did with their *Tribute to Tragically Dead Women*.

The tribute featured interpretations of songs made famous by Marilyn Monroe, Judy Garland, Janis Joplin, Karen Carpenter, Patsy Cline and Mama Cass.

"We like dead girls – they can't defend themselves," says Giles, revealing some of the wicked humour that infects their shows.

The regulars aren't the only ones who include Drag-o-rama as part of their weekly routine. The staff at Hush also looks forward to Sunday nights. Waitress Natasha Proznik prefers working on Sundays. She enjoys what she describes as alternative family entertainment. Former bartender Jason Brown agrees.

"The show brings out the straight community and makes it all right for them to be in a gay bar," he says.

Indeed, the straight community seems to be increasingly accepting of drag. Terry Froud, former owner and operator of Rumours, which formerly occupied Hush's current location, believes that AIDS education at a younger age increases awareness and acceptance of homosexuality. He lauds performers like Rupaul who have made drag a "safer" practice in the last decade.

The common image of a drag queen is one of a glam queen in a sequined dress, lip-synching to Celine Dion. The Disco Bondage Prostitutes want it known that they are drag queens, not female impersonators. They would prefer to be called "Dirty Divas" and to have people recognize their show for what they believe it is – a way to get dressed up, to make fun of everything and to get free drinks. As Tillson puts it:

"It's Hallowe'en every Sunday night."

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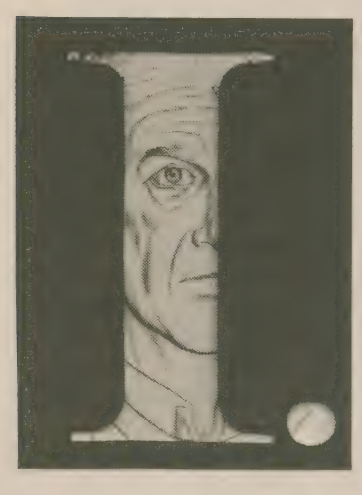
The I in *I.* of Stephen Dixon



I.
Stephen Dixon
McSweeney's Books

by Craig Battle

A Man Ignorant of Nevada (upon seeing the Grand Canyon for the first time): Man, this thing is *big*.

This is a metaphor.

The man is me – though in reality I've been twice to the Sagebrush (Battle-Born, Silver) State – and Nevada is Stephen Dixon. The Grand Canyon – I think, this is sort of where the metaphor falls apart – is Dixon's most recently published novel, *I.*

First of all, *I.* has very little to do with Nevada or the Grand Canyon. It has to do with, let's see here, everything else.

The novel follows a writer named I. (yes, that's right) through the stages of his life in random, or seemingly random, order. From his post-college days in Paris, through middle age in Baltimore and the deterioration of his wife's health, and into his childhood on the sidewalks of Manhattan, watching the Thanksgiving Parade.

And back again. And so on and so forth.

Instead of glossing over the everyday details of *I.*'s life for the sake of the larger narrative, Dixon uses little else to craft his story. He revels in misunderstandings and blow-ups and mundane tragedies, as in the chapter entitled, "The Apology":

"'I'm sorry for the way I acted today,' he says to his daughter and she says 'That's okay, I already forgot it.' 'I'm sorry for the way I acted this morning,' he says to his daughter and she says 'Okay, if you say so.'"

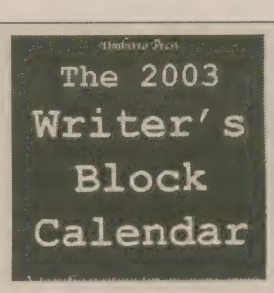
On and on like that.

"'I'm sorry for the way I acted before,' she says to him and he says 'And I accept your apology.' 'What do you mean? I'm not to blame, you are. I only said it because that's what you always say when you apologize for yelling or something like that.' 'I know. I was only trying to worm my way out of it, and I apologize for that too.'"

The chapter reveals (through nothing but dialogue, and without a single paragraph break in eight pages) the course of I's relationship with his younger daughter. He yells at her, he apologises, she becomes less willing to accept his apologies until she, heart breakingly, does the same to him.

And this is what Dixon does best. He challenges the conventions of literature and narrative, denying the reader things like linear flow and consistency of narration and exposition, and somehow creates a character more human than your friends and neighbours.

But, back to what I was saying before. The Grand Canyon is big, see. Stephen Dixon's work is also big. Important. Get it?



by Sarah Petrescu

Okay, admit it. Your writing skills have plateaued. The brilliance you displayed in first-year English is a distant memory. You've lost your literary chutzpah, and you want it back. So here's your chance.

The *2003 Writer's Block Calendar* is the literary lovechild of UVic professors Kim Blank and Michael Cullen. Part grammar/writing style guide and part Zen affirmation, the calendar is as entertaining as it is informative. It offers useful advice such as how to properly use a hyphen – yeah, like you know already.

It also offers an abundance of writing proverbs, like "Bad writing is due more to laziness than to ignorance," and highly handy factoids, as in "Kangaroos cannot walk backwards."

Blank and Cullen created the calendar after colleagues commented that they would like to have a paged calendar with a writing idea for each day.

The duo took the idea and ran with it – straight to the printers. The results were a success.

Since its inception four years ago, *The Writer's Block Calendar* has become more popular each year. It sells for ten bucks, a dollar of which is donated to the UVic bursary fund.

The calendar is light-hearted, but also didactic. Having just browsed through it, I feel smarter and cooler already.

The 2003 Writer's Block Calendar *(Umberto Press) is available at UVic bookstores.*

Shiny disco balls

Ultra: 80's vs Electro
Ultra Records
by Stewart Wood

Twenty-four tracks of pure electro joy.

"White Horse" by Laidback is the ee-pit-o-mee of the sexy, funny, pulsating throb that was the 80's, and its reinterpretation in the current electro movement. As a primer for discovering the origins and development of electronic dance music, Ultra: 80's vs Electro is a fine place to start. There's almost two hours of excellent dance music here – and enough faux-German accents on CD2 to fill a stadium in Nuremburg.

The swathes of sound build in intensity. From the restrained pulse of Kraftwerk's "Trans-Europe Express" to Who Da Funk's fabulous, insistent "Shiny Disco Balls," it's a rich mix of highly danceable pop. Clearly, not everyone was listening to heavy metal nonsense like Iron Maiden in 1982, thank god.

So many good tunes here, especially on the edgy and seamless CD2. Particularly outstanding: Chicks On Speed's "Fashion Rules!," Felix Da Housecat's "Madame Hollywood" and Miss Kittin & The Hacker's "1982."

Essential for the holidays (batteries not included).

Sondre: Say my name, say my name

Sondre Lerche
Faces Down
Atralwerks

by Robin Platts

This is good. It's really good. It's brilliant.

It's Belle and Sebastian meets the High Llamas meets Destroyer. (If you're a 60s purist, let's say it's the Kinks meets the Zombies meets Donovan.)

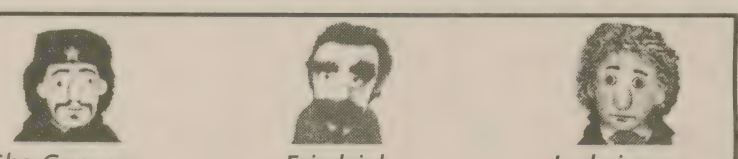
Faces Down is super-melodic and super-cool. It's what they call pop genius. "Beatle-esque" is a dreadful cliché but, if it wasn't, I'd probably throw it in for those who aren't rock-snobbish enough to be enticed by the above reference points.

Sondre Lerche is Norwegian, but he does Britpop better than most of today's Brits. He's just 19, and it's criminal that he's already got so much talent.

Maybe it's legal in Norway, but certainly not here.

What more can I say? Just go buy this album.

Okay, you don't even have to buy it. The Martlet *is giving copies away. I can't believe it. This album is too good to give away. But there it is. Put down that Oasis album, get over here and try to pronounce Sondre Lerche. It's tougher than you'd think.*



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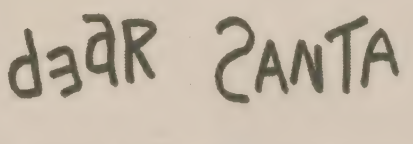
Something sublime: all Iain wants for Christmas

by Iain McLetchie

"Christmas-time and the livin's easy,
Bradey's on the microphone with Ras M.G.,
All people in the school will agree that we're
Well qualified to represent the U.V.I.C."

Okay, so I may have tweaked Sublime's lyrics just a touch, but I don't think anyone will disagree that the living's easy during Christmas…oops, I mean, during Holiday Festival. Of course, it's no cakewalk for Santa, what with having to read millions of wish lists and deliver innumerable sacks of goodies in shoddy weather. But hey, that's his job, so I may as well burden him with another list.



I wish that Mario Lemieux would receive a full year of health. I would also ask for a full year of wealth, but I think he already has that. That a much-injured, once-retired cancer survivor would be leading the scoring by such a huge margin – 12 points as of Monday – is ridiculous in itself, but it's also pleasing in so many ways. Please Santa, give him a full season of vigour so that we may all bask in his glory and curse at not being able to see more of him in his prime. And Santa, no, this has nothing to do with any hockey pools. Not a chance. No way.

I wish that Shaq would get injured more often. Hey, not so quick with the coal, Santa. I really like the Big Copernicus, but can't stand his little sidekick Kobe. There was something perversely enjoyable in seeing the Lakers go 3-8 to start the season while Shaq was in civilian clothes on the bench. It's not often that bystanders have an opportunity to see an ego deflate in such speedy fashion, and it would be nice to see it happen more often. So, I'm sorry Santa, but I'm requesting that you give Big Aristotle the gift of injuries.

I wish that more NFL games were white-outs like last Sunday's Buffalo-Miami match. If there's one thing about football that really gets me going, it's seeing pampered professional athletes trying to slice and dice on a huge patch of frozen tundra. It's also a reminder of the glory tales from days of old, when gridiron greats would strap on tennis shoes and commence battle in blinding snowstorms. Okay, I know that's waxing a bit dramatic but it sure sounds exciting, doesn't it, Santa?

I wish the UVic Vikes could muster a few more athletic sponsors. New Balance and Pepsi are pretty cool, but when you see middling schools like Trinity Western wearing brand-new warm-up gear, and matching shoes from Adidas, it kind of reflects badly on our school. This isn't a dig at the hard-working people in Development and Promotions, who do their best with what our hyper-leftist student government gives them. The latter has a large and extremely tainted say in who and what companies can advertise and deal with our campus, handicapping any chance of our athletic programs getting more sponsors. A truly representative student-led governing council? I think not.

I also wish more students would give a rats-ass about student politics, because until more sane-minded students vote, UVic is going to be stuck with those aforementioned NDP-friendly people in power for quite a while. Democracy only works if we all take advantage and vote. Umm…Santa, again, sorry, but you know how much politics gets me worked up.

I wish Jarome Iginla would get the monkey off his back and score a few more goals. He's got six so far this season, which isn't too many for a dude making six-point-five million. By all accounts, he's a hard-working, down-to-earth guy who deserves better. I also wish the Flames would win a few more matches. We need hockey in southern Alberta, and a slow start isn't helping. And, again, this has nothing to do with hockey pools or personal pride. No way. Never.

I wish the 'Nuckers would keep their hot streak rolling right through the playoffs. Santa, if you can assure that, you'll be giving a huge gift to the whole province, a wish that's gone unfulfilled in the past few years.

There you go, Santa. I know there are some tough requests in there, but I think you're up to the task. Have fun flying the night sky.

Merry Christmas.

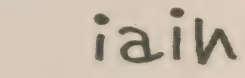


photo by Rich Cole

Shaun Doherty brings the ball into UBC territory last Friday at McKinnon.

Problems plaguing sports (part one of 3000)

by Mark Samcoe

Complain about athletes, amateur and professional, and you're going to sound like a broken record. Unwittingly throw in some allusion to the Rolling Stones, and you've earned the right to drop the needle pour toujours.

Dr. Bruce Howe, a UVic sports psychology professor, recently paid lip service to Jagger and Co. in response to a Canadian spoil-sport parent.

"You don't always get what you want," said Howe in a statement issued in response to Micheal Croteau's lawsuit against the New Brunswick Amateur Hockey Association. Croteau is asking for $200,000 in psychological and punitive damages to his 16-year-old son after the league's MVP award was presented to another player.

He also wants the trophy given to his son, the league's leading scorer.

I remember Bret "the Hitman" Hart storming back to the ring at Wrestlemania IV – after being tossed from the Battle Royal by Bad News Brown – stripping the trophy from Brown's gloved hand and mangling it to matchstick splinters.

That. Was funny. Croteau. Is not.

"He's going to be marked," Howe said of the sniping teen. "Twenty years down the road he won't be remembered for losing the award. He'll be remembered for his father's actions."

Howe, who spent 13 years as a UVic rugby coach, and coached the national team from 1979 to 1983, now helps with developmental rugby teams.

Howe said the focus on winning is taking the fun out of children's sports. He's worried that awards recognizing individual effort are eroding the intrinsic values of sport.

"The whole essence of developmental sport is the participation," said Howe, who also stresses the importance of parental involvement in youth sport.

Howe believes parents should help their child evaluate positive and negative experiences, and avoid pressuring them. A parent's influence should only supercede if a coach advocates violence, cheating, and abuse.

"They check that it's a good experience for kids and the coaches don't espouse things they don't believe in," Howe said. "When things go wrong, be supportive. It's a fine balance, really, and it's not easy."

However, Howe doesn't directly link the behaviour of professional athletes to Croteau's actions.

"They can do whatever they like," he said. "That's the way they live."

But does that absolve them of their influence?

Some days, Randy Moss, ever-quarantined in his ivory tower, doesn't want to catch anything delivered from Dante Culpepper. Who would Randy be if he wasn't so pretentious? The kid on your peewee football team who demanded to be thrown to, lolly-gagged his way through slants and button-hooks, overstepped passes, and pouted incessantly.

Then, he was just a kid. Maybe he was a good kid and his dad hadn't addressed his own athletic depravities. Hey dad, you got cut in ninth grade because you passed like a kidney stone. Now, daddy's pride and joy is Randy Moss.

It goes like this: a few lucky kids, nurtured by overgrown spoiled children in lettered jerseys, are coddled into middle-age by Nike and portly team owners with deep pockets. Cycle and repeat.

Howe prefers to take issue with biased big league reward principle.

"They should be penalizing people for not producing," Howe said.

Amen.

If players receive bonuses for championship victories, fat contract extensions following breakout seasons, Howe thinks lacklustre production should inspire the spirit of giving. Giving back the millions they haven't earned.

Jarome Iginla, I hope you're reading.

From poor-sport parents to richly rewarded pro stars, Howe believes these happenings aren't isolated incidents. And their frequency is going unregulated. Like pirate radio. Plundering booty and broadcasting the worst of human nature.

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Sports Call

Repairing the damage with a good spanking

Managing editor Craig Battle is a bitch, a mother, a child and a lover. And you? You are so busted.

photo by Alison McDonald

A look into the not-too-distant future, where sports fans will be outlawed. There will be no more smuggling beer into football games into Royal Athletic Park. No more heckling nine-year-olds from the cheap seats. But there will be hoverboards. The Cubs will win the World Series. And Archie will decide once and for all, Betty or Veronica.

by Craig Battle

Sports fans: This is a scolding. If I knew your middle names, I'd use them now.

If you were my brother, which you might be, I would say, "Christopher Edward Battle. How could you?"

Yeah. That's right. I told you this was a scolding and I wasn't lying, so go and sit in the corner.

Wait.

Before you go, because you're going to bed without dinner tonight, you should at least get a little food for thought. You should know why I'm ticked to high heaven with you.

You will remember a little something called last night, and a little something else called what you were doing with friends and beers in front of the television. Come on. You know. You were watching sports again.

Don't "But Mom!" me, young ladies and gentlemen. Don't sass me. I know. I *know*. You, on the other hand, obviously don't.

Let me fill you in: You, my dears, are killing sports.

"How is this possible?" you ask. "How could I – by supporting sports – be killing them?"

You've heard of cause and effect? Something happens and then something else happens based on the first something happening and so on? Yes? Well, that is you.

You put the whole thing in motion.

Let's go through the checklist. The lack of heart in professional sports. You. The climbing ticket prices. Also you. The inflated salaries, the egos, free agency. You, you and you.

Everything you complain about (i.e. athletes making millions to put balls in hoops and pucks in nets but refusing to take drug tests, sign autographs, stop doing blow, etc.), you are responsible for.

I had such high hopes for you. All of us did.

Here. Let me tell you a bedtime story. Once upon a time, before you were born, there were just sports. Games. People playing games and having fun. Then, one day, someone came along and started watching the people play their games and have their fun and fucked everything up for everyone.

Oh no!

See, because someone else came along and said, "Hey. This person here is the market. And this game over here is the product. If I put up walls and stands and gates and keep out all the freeloaders I can charge for this." The end.

You've taken some math? Some entry-level algebra? Of course you have, I've helped you with your homework. Here's an equation for you:

Fans = $

You, my darlings, are being exploited. I know these days it's all about backwards caps and oversized jerseys and bling bling. Yes, I've been reading your magazines, but these people aren't your friends. To them you're just big dollar signs. Your true friends don't care what you wear.

No? Not buying it?

Well, how about this. I don't care what you do with your time. You can go on the way you're going on and kill yourselves with those sports of yours. Go ahead. Go.

Reverse psychology? Anything?

Okay. Let me reason with you. Business people pay broadcasters to run their ads during games. Broadcasters pay professional leagues for the rights to show those games. Leagues pay teams, teams pay athletes, athletes go on strike for more money.

That's fine. You knew all that. You're smart kids.

But who do you think pays for it all? Who was that in row three at the last home game, standing on the seat that cost you a month's allowance, and yelling, "D-fence! D-fence!?" Uh-huh. You. A pox on you.

Shame, shame, double shame.

And don't try to tell me you didn't know you were the kingpin. You knew. You always knew (deep in your little guts, that's your conscience talking to you). That defense won't hold water with me, little misses and misters.

Yes. Shh. Let it out. Shh.

Okay. Now that I've broken you down to your foundations, made you see the light (shut up and humour me for a second, huh?), you are getting sleepy. Very sleepy.

You do not need to watch sports anymore. You are strong and resolute and so very strong and people say, "Sports," and you say, "Hmm?"

And you go outside and play games and have fun, like in the old days. And I snap my fingers three times and you wake up and, yes, we are all better.

Or, whatever.

Right?

Editor's top 10

by Robin Platts

The creative process. I can't hope to ever understand how it works. But I know this much: nothing spices up a story like a lively, colourful pop culture reference. No one knows this better than *Martlet* sports editor Mark Samcoe.

Not a week passes without Samcoe posing several increasingly bizarre questions to the *Martlet* staff. Here are some favourites:

1. "What are some Foreigner album titles?"
2. "What are those sparklers called that you put in birthday cakes?"
3. "Brian May is the guitarist in Queen, right? Is that his solo on 'We Will Rock You'?"
4. "What's it called when parents sit their kids down for a chat?"
5. "Who played Winona Ryder's dad in *Reality Bites*?"
6. "What do you guys know about Sweden?"
7. "Does the word "hypnotized" appear in the song 'You Shook Me All Night Long' by AC/DC?"
8. "Does anyone know where the three-toed sloth is most commonly found?"
9. "The human appendix – it's a repository for toxins, right?"
10. "A male dog can't be in heat, right?"

You're a big-time track star. You're sponsored by all the heavies, including the NRA. You pay someone to tie your shoelaces. Double knots. And you're fast. A speedy little devil you are. One day you're running the 100m dash at a family reunion picnic. You are so far ahead of everyone. Do you continue running full-out and embarass the relatives, or do you ease up? Maybe stop for a nap or a latté? What do you do?

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Write Sports for *the Martlet*.

Choose your own adventure.
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Hey! It's a penalty box social, and you're invited!

by Mark Samcoe

Various Artists
Songs from the Penalty Box – Canadian Music Sampler
Tooth and Nail

Normally, the Arts section drafts this sort of review. But given the title, Sports got dibs on this blue chip prospect. Seven songs from seven bands on Tooth and Nail. Here's the scouting profile:

Skates on weak legs. Decent, but misguided shot. Idiot-savant geographers came up with the title, surmising hockey is our gospel, and the ticket to our music-buying hearts. An overachiever. Obedient, verging on mindless. Had they simply swapped "Penalty Box" for "Sin Bin," they'd be a first-round contender. Chief asset: So earnest it could save Christmas. Major liability: MxPx, who take melted marshmallow and turn it into beef consomme. Oh, they sound so sincere, so remorseful, singing about how dumping some chick and leaving her in tears was such a big mistake. A regular trio of Georgie Porgies they are, kissing the girls and making them cry in a verse-chorus-verse of pop-punk. Assholes.

And now, the real. *The Martlet's Songs from the Sin Bin*:

"Thunderstruck" – AC/DC

John Tonelli's serving time for a Billy Smith blocker to Marcel Dionne's groin. Smith will likely strike Tonelli's jock if he finds out about last Tuesday. Mrs. Smith was late to pick up Billy after the team's morning skate at Nassau Coliseum. Billy, under the impression he'd get to see Phoebe Cates topless for the first time since *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*, had left with Mike Bossy to catch a matinee showing of *Gremlins*. Mrs. Smith entered the locker room to find Tonelli, clad only in his elbow pads, slotting a skate into the automatic sharpener.

Up against it, she kept her headphones on, the AC/DC at full volume the whole four minutes and 55 seconds. Tonelli, on pace to score 30 goals this season, watched sparks erupt from his skate blade through the sharpener's viewing window. He was trying to come up with an apt metaphor, when Brian Johnson caterwauled "caught in the middle of a lightning attack."

"That's it!" Tonelli thought. "Lightning."

"We Will Rock You" – Queen

Kevin Dineen has always wanted to hear the guitar solo at the end of this Queen anthem, but play always resumes. He has never heard Brian May wank his Gibson at rink-level. Geoff Sanderson, linemate, lactose intolerant, intolerant of the recalcitrant, promised Dineen that tonight he'd delay the game if he was on the ice when that song came over the arena sound system. Tonight is Dineen's last game. He's minutes from retirement and obscurity: canvassing for cancer, running a Tastee-Freez franchise into the ground, high cholesterol and a wonky clavicle. And, he's in the box. Sanderson's not on the ice. Freddie's singing, "Big disgrace." May seems so far away. Dineen hates the winter. The unforgiving cold. The stingy daylight the day doles out. May. So far away.

"Theme from *Phantom of the Opera*" – Andrew Lloyd Webber

Jesus, Dan Kordic hasn't heard this song since his junior days in Medicine Hat – played whenever the visiting team scored. Tonight, against Washington, his open-ice slash led to a shorthanded wrap-around. He can skate back to the bench now. The gate's open.

But he's lingering. Sitting, hunched over, thinking about the three-toed sloth. The slowest thing going in the rainforests of Madagascar. And he's thinking how his brother John should've died in a penalty box, not in some Quebec hotel, done in by a bag of blow and a skunky bottle of Fin du Monde. He should've kicked it in here, in the penalty box. Dying mid-keg-stand, a couple hotties strung out on the bench, some guy named Red who works in the lawn-care aisle at Home Hardware, throwing fertilizer at beligerent fans. It would've been one sweaty, coked-up, toxic mess.

The gate is open. Time does a keg-stand. Dan. The three-toed sloth. A stillness.

"Rock and Roll part II" – Gary Glitter

Jabbering at a boisterous and vocal fan leaning over the penalty box glass, Shawn Mceachern develops a theory about referee Kerry Fraser. "Get stuffed! I didn't trip Turgeon. The man's clearly imbalanced."

Kerry Fraser. That's a girl's name. Fraser was probably the kid in elementary school who claimed to have seen all these *Night Court* episodes that no one else had. Like the one where Harry teaches Bull to play Mahjongg, or Roz does the Tootsie Roll at the Policeman's Ball. Kerry's parents never let him watch television, but he wanted in on the talk. Wanted to belong.

"Such bullshit," Shawn thinks.

Shawn never gave a shit about recapping *L.A. Law* or *Hart to Hart*. He always wanted someone to play *Transformers* with. Someone who read *3-2-1 Contact* and ate ants on a log for lunch.

"Thank God I'm a Country Boy" – John Denver

"Janne Niinimaa, I am so sorry. I'll make you some pancakes next time you're in Jersey." Joe Nieuwendyk mouths these words or something like them to the Oilers' defenseman, through the plexiglass. Match penalties for roughing. Janne got facewashed a lot as a child. He's got a face you just want to rub with snow. A glove in the gob is like an acid flashback. Janne struck back at Joe like a cobra. A cobra on skates.

Joe Nieuwendyk loves pancakes. Anywhere, anytime. He's even fantasized about covering the missus in buckwheat batter, and blueberries, dotting her skin like pustules.

"Hit Me With Your Best Shot" – Pat Benatar

Five for fighting. So worth it. He'd tagged Randy Carlyle real good. He's going to wear that bruise like a monocle. Yeah like that Clue guy, Colonel Mustard. Did him in with a lead pipe right in the kitchen.

Hey, why are they putting Pokey Reddick in goal?

Who's that singing? Benatar. Ooh, she's a sexy one. Him, her, a case of O'Keefe's, a copy of *The Neverending Story* on Beta. Tallyhoe!

"The Good Old Hockey Game" – Stompin' Tom Connors

Ken Baumgartner cross-checked Phil Bourque in the face. Sent him soaring into the boards. Would've knocked him out cold if it weren't for Bourque's physique. Built like those Oopee balls KFC used to give out with their big buckets of chicken and kryptonite green colesalw. Man, those Oopee balls could take a stomping. That pocket of water on the inside that made them wobble and dogleg every which way. Like an appendix, if an appendix had a purpose beyond pain.

Baumgartner's thinking about the human gene code now. Bourgue's being taken off the ice on a stretcher.

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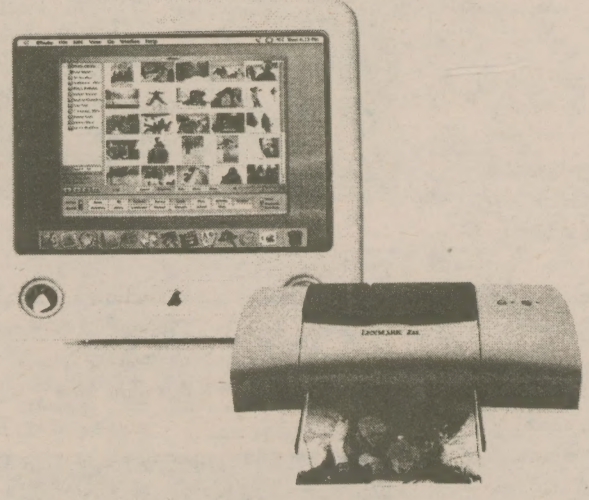

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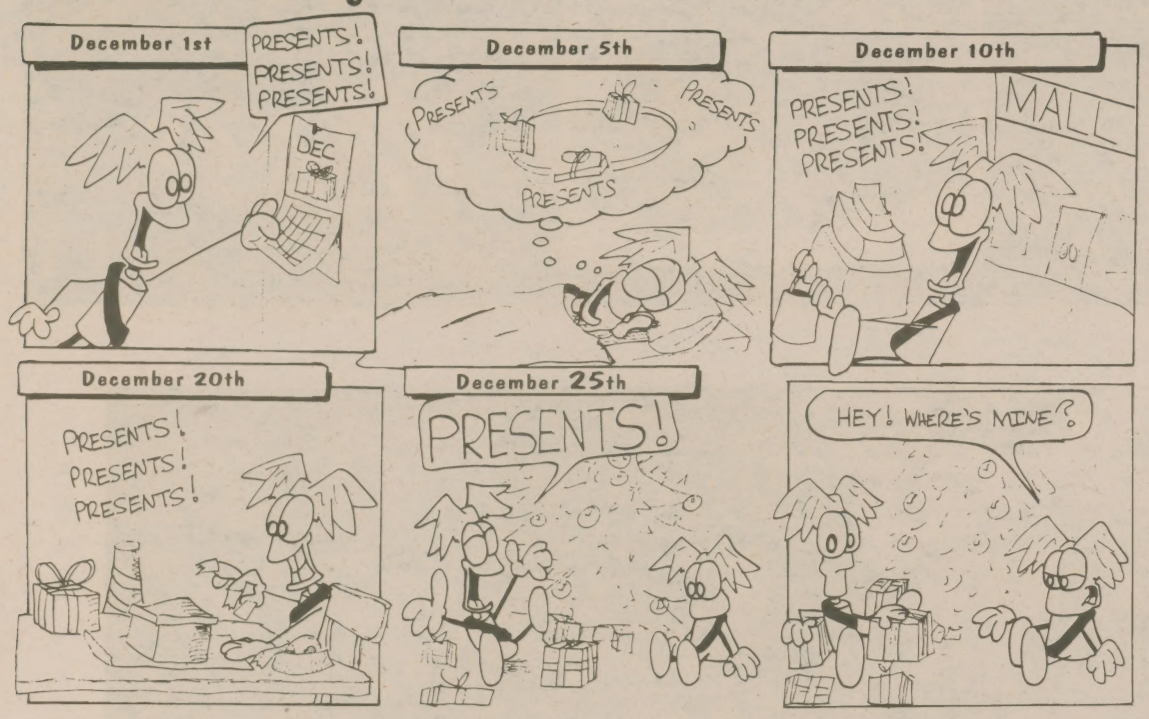
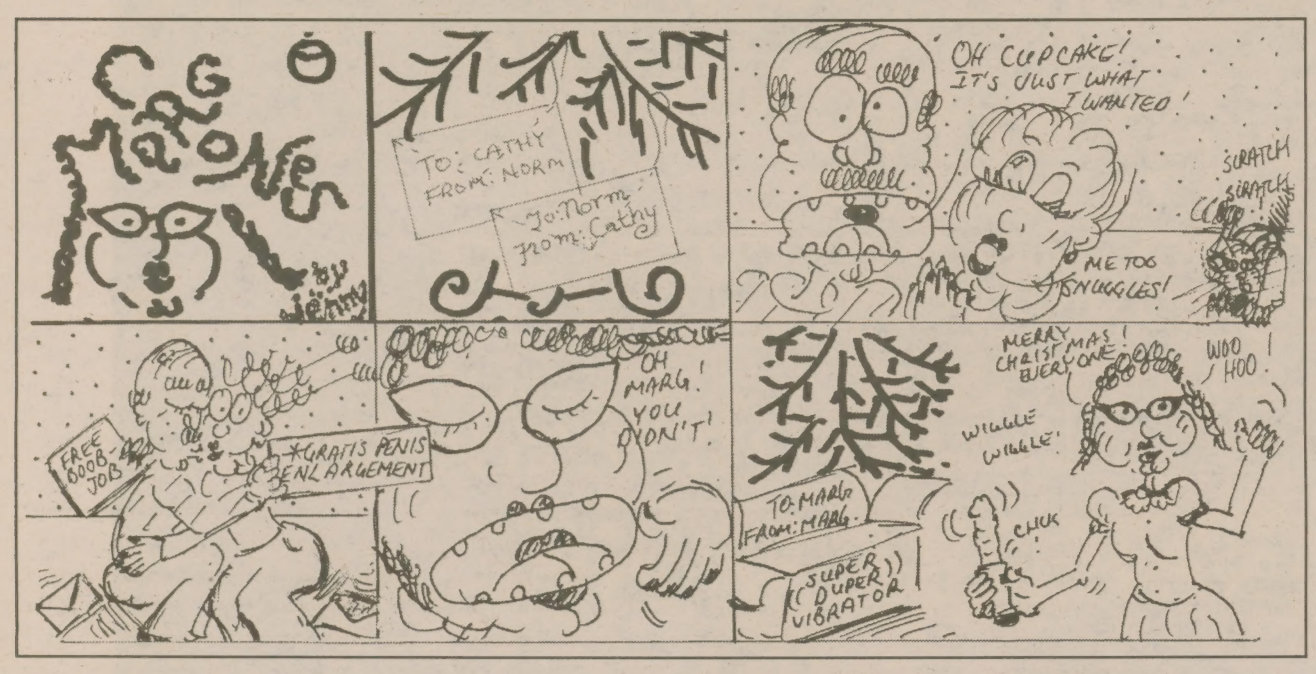
Kurtz And Gary

by Jeffrey Weston (westoons@hotmail.com)





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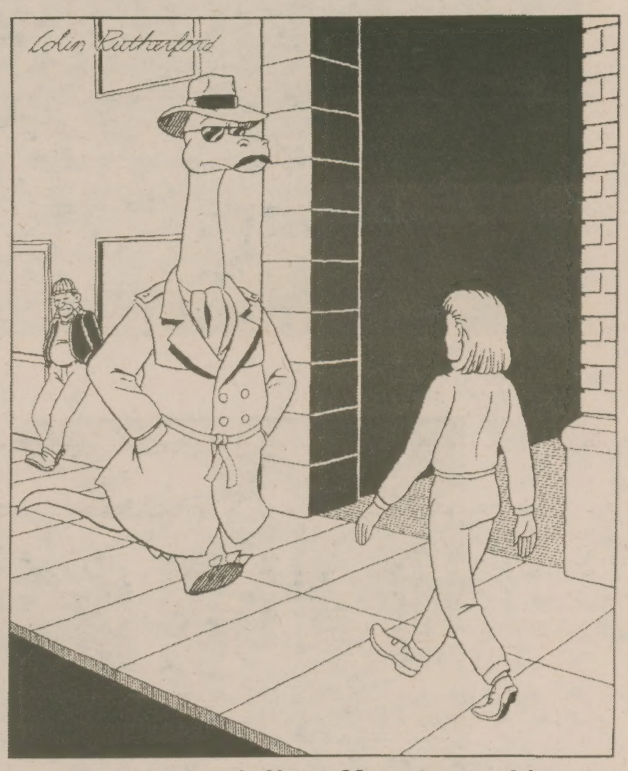

How the Loch Ness Monster avoids detection.

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I MEAN, ARE WE ALL THAT'S OUT THERE? OR IS THERE SOME HIGHER POWER?
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
WELL, SAM... I'M AN ATHEIST.
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off campus

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Do you know how to have a good time?
Are you kidding me, because if you are and it turns out you are anti-good time, I will be very mad. Because *the Martlet* is having a Christmas party at Soprano's Karaoke Club, Sat. Dec. 7 at 9:00. Man, can we sing. Come sing with us.

announcements

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This holiday season, Sue and I will be sitting on my dad's couch. Watching *Blade*. Drinking.

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auto repair

General automotive repair. Engine swaps, clutches, brakes, electrical, tune-ups, etc. Student discount on labour and parts. 479-5036 or 744-3386.

wanted

Apple iBook. Good condition. Call Stewart at 884-7691.

lost

Lost. One small green diary. Japanese written inside. Reward if found. Call James at 721-2488.

My goddamn heart. I am offering a reward. Ten bucks. Dead or alive.

for sale

Microwave. $25. Call Kat, 380-1577.

hey you

You still haven't taken it outside. I asked you, "Take it outside" and I meant it. Out. Shoo.

Bill: I can't see you again. Your ad described you as "discreet" and "straight-acting." I found you to be neither. You were flamboyant. You over-used the word "fabulous" and referenced Joan Crawford one time too many. If you hadn't started screaming "No wire hangers!" at the coat-check, things might have been different. I'm sorry. Vance.

John: Jesus, get your shit together. Sincerely, Jack.

Hey. You with the old motorbike. Ever heard of a getaway? My ladies and I were celebrating Cindy Lou's 35th and you and those other two cars and that cop and the goddamn taxi driver, meddling bastard, got in our way. So I totalled your ass. The cops will never know the truth, will they, tough guy?

Buy a muffin, Stupid.

And on the eighth day, God created me and that's when you knew that you wanted me. God and everyone knows you want me. You want me. Nate.

Christmas. Hanukkah. Kwanzaa. Ramadan. Yes. Good. Fine. I'll be in the bar.

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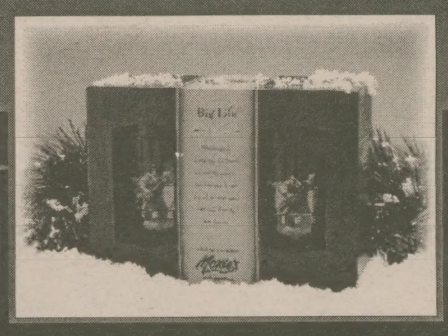
If they don't see how much you like them with these Gift Certificates... give them a pair of glasses.

Buy two $25 gift certificates, receive a beautiful boxed set of two Big Life beer glasses *free!**



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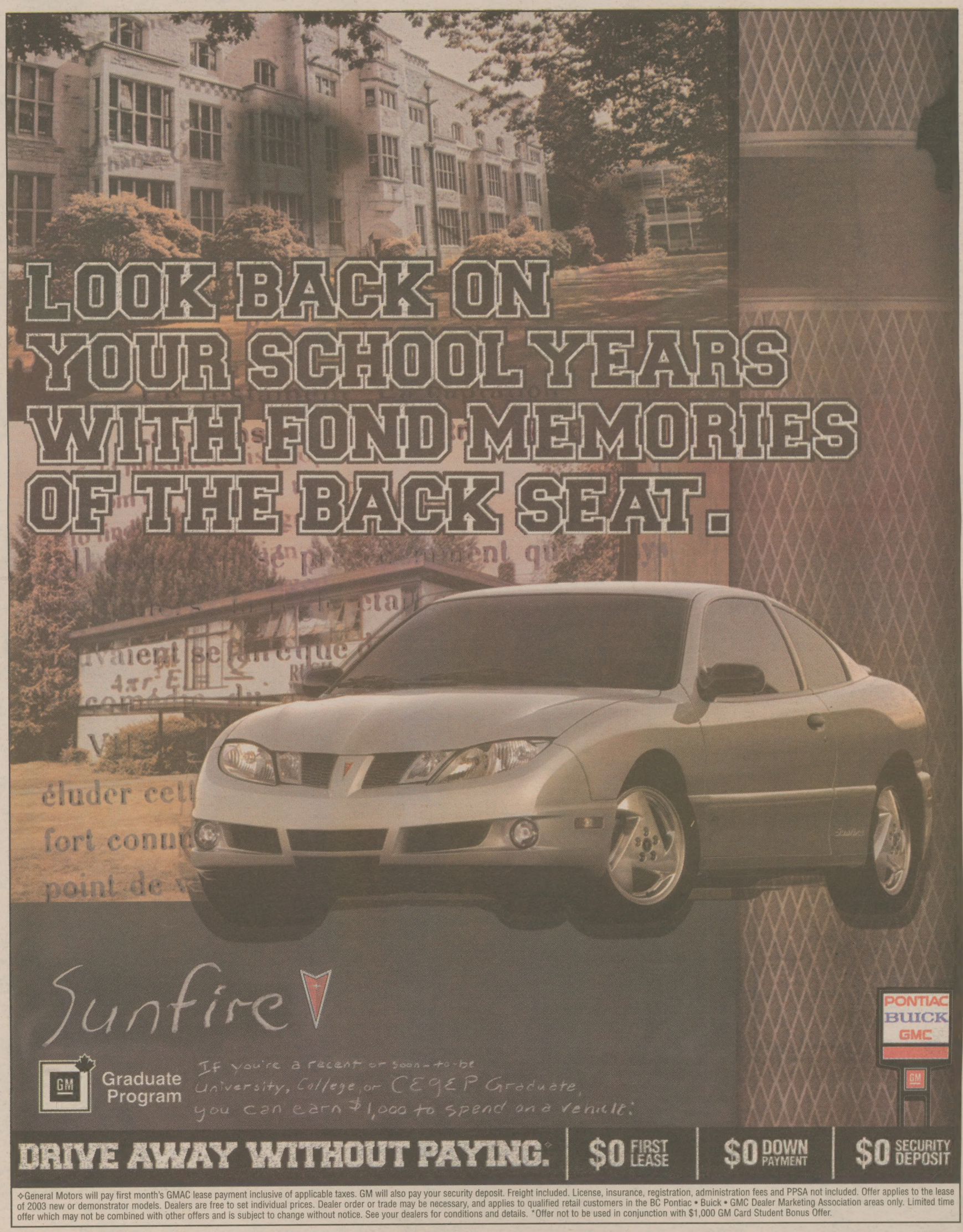

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Happy _____ !

(insert your occasion of choice here)

Come down to *the Martlet* office (sub b011) and sing us a carol to receive a *free* copy of one of the delightful compact discs pictured at left! Hurrah!